

Wethersfield LIFE

May 2016 • TurleyCT.com
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Volume 3, Edition 8

A century of golf

Wethersfield Country Club
celebrates a major anniversary
See story on page 4

A photograph of three men standing in front of a trophy case. The man on the left is wearing a dark suit, a light pink shirt, and a colorful geometric tie. The man in the center is seated, wearing a light blue shirt and a grey patterned blazer. The man on the right is standing, wearing a dark grey zip-up jacket over a white shirt. The trophy case in the background has several plaques, including one that says "PRO'S TROPHY".

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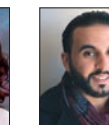
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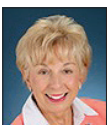
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Wethersfield LIFE

May 2016

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QUOTE OF NOTE:

"Progress in a time of scarcity."

- Town Manager Jeff Bridges

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ON THE COVER

Wethersfield Country Club is celebrating its centennial this year. Committee members include, from left, club President Mark Zimmermann, committee Chairman Gar Fellman and past President Tom Benoit.

Photo by Lisa Brisson

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Celebrating the 100th anniversary of Wethersfield Country Club are, from left, Tom Benoit, Richard Zanini, Lucille Zanini, Barbara Drouin, PGA Pro Ron Dellostritto, Ron Salerno and Gar Fellman.

A century of golf

Wethersfield Country Club marks its 100th anniversary

by Mark Jahne
Editor

It has been 100 years since someone struck the first golf ball at Wethersfield Country Club. The venerable private institution is celebrating that century of accomplishment and growth, including many years as a site for the PGA Tour.

The club was founded in 1916 by a group of businessmen primarily from the Hartford banking and insurance industries. The first president, Frederick Griswold of Wolcott Hill Road, was the driving force behind its inception.

Nine holes were built on approximately 60 acres of land between Prospect and Highland streets.

Robert Pryde, who is regarded as the father of Connecticut golf, designed the original nine holes. He served as the first secretary-treasurer of the Connecticut State Golf Association from 1922 to 1946.

Architect Philip Mason, Hartford superintendent of public works and a member of the club, designed the clubhouse. That structure and some tennis courts were dedicated June 9, 1917.

Within a few years, the membership had grown to 300, creating a demand for another nine holes that were built south of Highland Street in 1924 on farm land acquired from Herbert Kilby. The "outside" nine

holes were designed by WCC golf professional Sydney Covington with assistance from Jack Stait, golf professional at the Hartford Golf Club.

The Middletown trolley line brought golfers to the intersection of Wolcott Hill Road and Prospect Street, from where they walked to the club.

The original clubhouse burned to the ground Feb. 10, 1942, and a new one was erected and dedicated six months later, in time for the club's widely acclaimed invitation tournament.

The tennis courts were never rebuilt after the fire, and the membership never demonstrated enough

interest to construct a swimming pool. Over time, the clubhouse underwent major additions as locker and dining rooms were added.

Hartford and West Hartford families primarily represented the initial membership because Wethersfield's population in 1920 was only 4,342. By the 1940s, the membership was more balanced between Hartford and Wethersfield, after which the balance shifted to Wethersfield and its surrounding towns.

While the Great Depression of the 1930s, the clubhouse fire and the demands of World War II placed significant financial pressures on the

club, it survived.

"In the '30s and '40s it was very much a family club. Saturday at the club was a big day," Richard Zanini, a past president of the club, said.

He said parties and dances were abundant in those days. It's not quite as active now, but he added the clubhouse remains a busy place, hosting numerous dinners and parties.

It used to be that there were only a few options for membership. Today's 450 members have a wide menu from which to choose.

"Now we've got all types of memberships," current President Mark Zimmerman said.

One of them is a junior membership package for people 35 and younger. Several former collegiate players have signed on at this level. There are family memberships, corporate memberships and social memberships. Ongoing efforts are being made to attract more young people.

"It's brought a different energy to the place," Zimmerman said.

Women have long been involved in the club and became eligible for membership in their own right in the 1980s. Barbara Drouin is the women's golf chairwoman.

The economy is a "huge driving force" affecting membership, she said.

"I've been happy to see the youth program in the summer continue," she said, with the well-attended camp-like program serving as a way to rejuvenate the club.

The number of female golfers has declined over the years from a high of 120 to 40 now, but they still contribute to the club's overall success.

"I'd love to see that grow again," Drouin said.

"We have an active women's division," Lucille Zanini added.

They play tournaments on Wednesday mornings and conduct a holiday luncheon that benefits the wider community, including the town food and fuel banks and Christmas gifts for needy children. There is also a summer benefit tournament.

"I think the members here like to feel a part of the community," Drouin said.

"The board also created the opportunity for youngsters in the area to gain a golfing privilege for the summer months," Richard Zanini said.

The special offer does not require them or their families to join the club. He noted that the boys and girls golf teams at Wethersfield High School have long used the facility as their home course.

He is proud that the club earned a reputation with at least one area

sportswriter, who wrote that anything that was happening in golf in Connecticut was happening at Wethersfield Country Club.

That sense existed even before the professional men's tour started coming to town for the Insurance City Open, later called the Greater Hartford Open.

He added it is not unusual for professional golfers who come to TPC River Highlands in Cromwell to participate in The Travelers Championship – the successor to

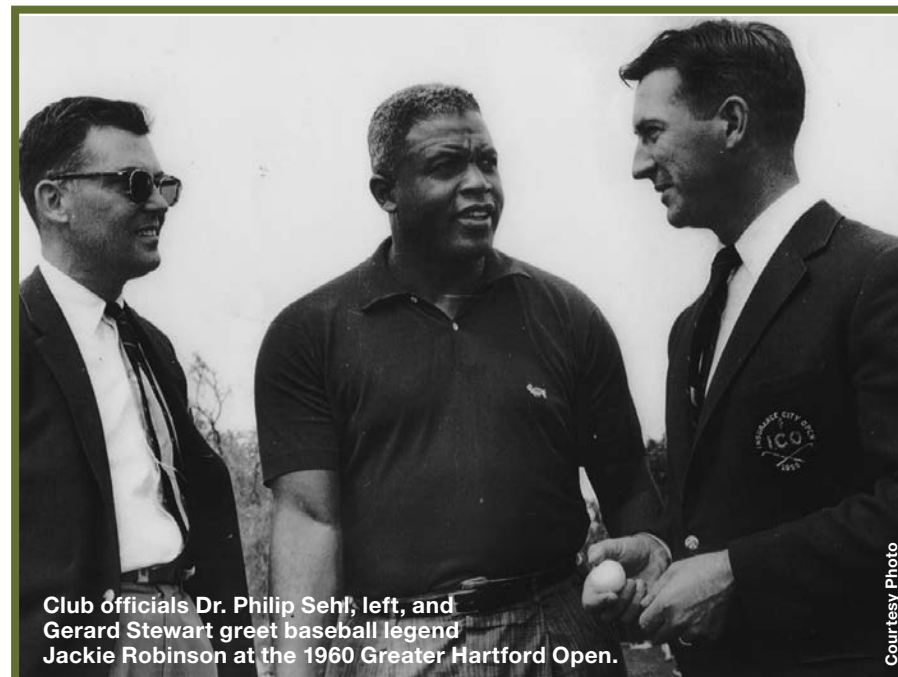
the GHO – to visit WCC for some practice.

Longtime PGA pro Lee Trevino was a frequent and popular participant in the GHO. He married a local woman and was granted an honorary WCC membership.

"He became part of the fabric of the club," Drouin said.

"There are a lot of golf clubs in the state who look at Wethersfield a little bit in awe," Gar Fellman said. "There's so much history here."

He is a past president of the club



Club officials Dr. Philip Sehl, left, and Gerard Stewart greet baseball legend Jackie Robinson at the 1960 Greater Hartford Open.

Courtesy Photo

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and currently serves as chairman of the Centennial Committee.

Fellman said members take pride in their course.

"We have one of the best-conditioned golf courses in the state," Richard Zanini said.

The PGA has honored WCC for having the best greens in the Northeast, he said. Members attribute that to the fact that they have enjoyed long service from three men who served as course superintendents since 1959. When the past two retired, their assistants took over the position.

"I think we've got the best restaurant in town," Zimmerman said.

He and the others give full credit to Executive Chef Thomas Grant.

Zanini said the club also has a strong history with caddies, a job all but nonexistent today with the popularity of carts. Many past caddies grew up to become members and top competitors.

PGA Head Professional Ron Dellostritto is delighted with the current status of the club. He was recently named the 2016 golf professional of the year by the Connecticut section PGA.

He is particularly pleased with the influx of students and younger members.

"It's great, it's very active. We have a great mix of members," he

said. "We have a great mix of regular play and tournament play."

He said there are approximately 15 outside organizations that rent the club on Mondays for their own tournaments. Many of these are fundraisers for nonprofit organizations, such as Wethersfield Dollars for Scholars, which the club financially supports.

Wethersfield Country Club received the CSGA's Distinguished Club Award in 2002. Since 1937, the club has hosted 36 major state and regional championships, 32 PGA Tour events, innumerable CSGA and USGA qualifying tournaments, and the Hartford Courant Tournament of Champions from 1961 to 1975.

The Connecticut Golf Hall of Fame has inducted eight WCC members for distinguished golf achievement and four members for distinguished service to the game. WCC, which was dubbed the "club of champions" by sportswriter and Hartford Times golf editor Skip Henderson, has won 36 state team championships, beginning in 1933.

It was the site of the Insurance City Open and Greater Hartford Open from 1952 until 1983. All the great professionals of the day played the Wethersfield course.

"It was the biggest single sporting event in New England," Zanini said.

Arnold Palmer won his first PGA Tour event in the United States at Wethersfield in 1956.

Ted Kroll, who returned from World War II with three Purple Hearts and was a leading money winner on tour in the early 1950s, won the inaugural event in 1952 in a mini-hurricane, followed by Bob Toski in 1953 (his first tour win), Tommy Bolt in 1954 (who shot 60 for the course record), Sam Snead in 1955 (who won by the largest margin of victory of seven strokes that still stands) and Arnold Palmer in 1956 (who beat Kroll in a playoff).

Later winners included Palmer again in 1960, Gardner Dickinson, Gene Littler, Billy Casper (four times), Ken Venturi, Art Wall Jr., Charlie Sifford, Bob Murphy, George Archer, Lee Trevino, Dave Stockton, Hubert Green and Curtis Strange.

WCC members have won 16 state amateur titles, four state open championships, five senior championships and five New England amateur titles, as well as junior championships, and numerous medalist honors in major events.

In 1971 alone, Wethersfield golfers won the state amateur (Bill Brew), New England amateur (Fred Kask), Hartford District championship (Allan Breed), state team championship, the state senior title (Noel

Fritsch) and the New England Left-Handed Championship (Ernie Spencer).

Most recently, Cody Paladino won the state amateur championship in 2013 and Evan Grenus won the amateur title in 2015 after having won the state junior title the prior year. Paladino also won the Connecticut Tournament of Champions, the State Four-Ball Championship, the WCC Club Championship by a record margin and the California State Fair Championship.

The club will celebrate its centennial with several activities including hosting the Connecticut Men's Amateur Championship for the fifth time from June 13-17.

A golf outing of past club professionals and assistant professionals is scheduled May 18, and a members' Centennial Gala takes place June 25, followed the next day by a past state and club champions golf event. A final centennial event is in the planning stages for September.

"We had a big New Year's Eve party to start off the year," Drouin said. **WL**

Historical information in this story was provided by Richard Zanini, a past president of the club, who compiled its official history for the centennial celebration.

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Dave Loda will once again portray a horseman from the 5th Connecticut Regiment at the May 28 Revolutionary War encampment and battle on the grounds of the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum.

It's a rebellion

Two major Revolutionary War events coming soon to Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum

by Mark Jahne
Editor

Not one, but two, major events with a Revolutionary War theme are coming to the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum during the month of May.

The museums' largest annual event, a Revolutionary War encampment and skirmish, is scheduled for May 28 on the grounds behind the museum. The 5th Connecticut Regiment will appear in full military uniform to honor the 235th anniversary of George Washington's visit to Wethersfield to plot war strategy with his French counterpart, the Comte de Rochambeau.

The day begins at 9 a.m. with the soldiers marching in the town's

Memorial Day Parade. Visitors can reenact closely with the soldiers at the museum starting at 10 a.m. and enjoy educational demonstrations including musket shooting, a muster, military drills for children, bayonets, cooking, period music, colonial dress and more.

A featured character is a doctor of the 54th Regiment of Foot who will demonstrate the dramatic medical techniques utilized on the battlefield.

The day's highlight is a surprise attack at 1 p.m. by members of His Majesty's 54th Regiment of Foot led by Battalion Capt. Steven Gardner. Dave Loda, aboard his horse Huckleberry, will lead the 5th



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Connecticut Regiment against them.

Loda portrays Lt. Col. David Humphreys, an aide-de-camp to Washington, and narrates the event while on horseback. He will demonstrate 18th century military horsemanship following the skirmish.

"The battle keeps getting a little bit longer and a little better every year," Charles Lyle, executive director of the museum, said. "We now have two horsemen and they're going to do some maneuvers together. We may have an exchange of prisoners at the end of the battle, which will involve the doctor, and that should be dramatic."

Lyle said the museum is developing a new in-depth tour related to the American Revolution. That time period is the institution's mainstay.

"We want to reinforce the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum as a center for interpreting the Revolution," he said. "That's why this encampment has become so important in our annual program."

He praised the re-enactors for taking their roles seriously and said there is an excellent chemistry between the horsemen.

Admission to all of the outdoor activities of the encampment is free. Regular admission will be charged for visitors who choose to tour the historic houses that make up the museum.

Another upcoming program examines the life of a Revolutionary War soldier. Digging Deeper takes place May 14 with separate installments at 10 a.m.,

noon and 2 p.m.

Veteran re-enactor and guide Sal Carmosino will be assisted by musket-toting Anthony Riccio. Carmosino has been a Revolutionary and Civil War re-enactor for more than three decades and is curator technician of the museum, which he has also served as a tour guide for 16 years.

Admission is \$15 and advance ticket purchase is recommended. Visit webb-deane-stevens.org/tour-tickets for tickets.

Digging Deeper Tours take place on the second Saturday of every month. This one allows visitors to examine such items as a haversack, wooden canteen, a gun powder horn made from a cow's horn, sealing wax, a quill pen, dice made from musket balls, a fire-starting kit with flint and a mouth harp.

The tour will also show in detail why Washington stayed at the Webb House for five nights in 1781 and how the final battle of the Revolutionary War was won.

In the addition, the museum is planning a special event July 4 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Wallace Nutting opening the Webb House as one of his colonial picture houses. Nutting was a prominent artist, photographer and antiquarian.

The May 28 encampment is underwritten, in part, by a grant from the Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Connecticut. **WL**

For more information call 860-529-0612 ext. 12 or visit webb-deane-stevens.org.



Historic re-enactor Sal Carmosino leads the 5th Connecticut Regiment in a charge against the Redcoats.

Manager requests 3.22 percent increase

Proposed budget of \$99.3 million presented for Town Council review

By Mark Jahne
Editor

Taxpayers are likely to see a slight increase in the 2016-17 municipal budget once it is adopted by the Town Council in the middle of May.

Town Manager Jeff Bridges presented a proposed budget of \$99,359,019 to the council, which represents an increase of 3.22 percent and a rise in the mill rate from 38.19 to 39.19.

Bridges said if the budget were approved as proposed – an unlikely scenario, as the council is likely to make some adjustments – the taxes on the average-priced home in town would increase by \$169.36.

The primary budget driver is debt service for the high school

expansion and renovation. At \$85.5 million, it the most expensive public works project in town history.

The proposed budget includes more than \$5 million for debt service, nearly \$900,000 of which is for the high school. The town issued \$22 million of general obligation bonds in 2014 and \$11 million more in 2016. One more bond issue of \$10 million is scheduled for 2017.

Without the high school, which was approved by voters when the project went to referendum, the budget increase would be 2.41 percent.

A significant change in the budgeting process this year is a new state law that caps motor vehicle taxes at 32 mills.

“Our grand list took a hit because of the DMV issue with the state” over the motor vehicle tax cap, Bridges said.

The combined \$99.3 million budget is a combination of \$40.9 million for town government and \$57.4 million for public education.

Bridges also proposes \$915,729 for a separate road improvement fund that has existed in recent years to set aside money for street repaving and repairs.

He said when the proposed budget is broken out into separate town and school accounts the numbers are modest. School spending is up 1.17 percent and town government spending is up 1.9 percent.

The Board of Education will be able to add some staff unless the council makes significant cuts to its bottom line. There are no new town operations jobs. Capital improvement spending remains steady.

The grand list of taxable property rose 0.02 percent. Bridges is hopeful that the loss of motor vehicle tax revenue due to the 32 mill cap will somehow be rectified by the state and that the town will receive the additional 7 mills worth of tax revenue on each car, truck and other types of vehicles.

The 2016-17 budget proposal is a reduction from the 3.69 percent hike approved by the council for the current fiscal year, a decrease of nearly



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half of 1 percent.

In addition to the high school project, other cost drivers include wages, health benefits for new retirees and a nearly 6 percent increase in the cost for water and sewer services from the Metropolitan District Commission.

"Health care – we got fortunate – it's flat," Bridges said.

He added that none of the unions that settled contracts with the town received large wage increases.

The town is seeing an increase in its retiree medical expenses because of what he calls "legacy employees" – people who came to work for Wethersfield at a time when lifetime health benefits were part of the employment package. When they retire, they continue to receive town-paid health insurance, as do the people who replace them.

"[This is] progress in a time of scarcity."

Town Manager Jeff Bridges

"New employees don't get that package," Bridges said.

The town manager chose not to refer to his plan as a maintenance budget. He still has things he wants to accomplish, and the projects and capital repairs have been assigned priorities to see how much can be accomplished with the available money.

"We will make progress where we can. We've got some big things down the road," he said. "[This is] progress in a time of scarcity."

Future projects include drainage improvements, paving and increasing the size of the public works salt barn.

Mayor Paul Montinieri had a positive reaction to the budget.

"Our first look at it is actually pretty good," he said.

He called the numbers decent, considering the impact of the high school debt. He also cited a 12 percent fund balance as being the highest ever.

Montinieri said he expected the

council to trim the school budget, but not to any great extent. He also expressed confidence that Wethersfield is in a good place as far as its fiscal health is concerned.

"We're going to do better than most of the surrounding towns. I think Jeff did a great job. We're all very sensitive with what's happening with the economy," Montinieri said.

As this issue went to press, the Town Council had scheduled an April 18 public hearing to allow residents to comment on the budget. This will be followed by one or more workshops and a final budget must be voted on no later than May 15.

Anyone interested in reviewing the budget may do so online at wethersfieldct.com. Paper copies are available at the public library and in the town manager's office at town hall. **WL**

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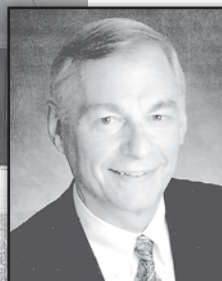
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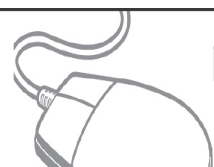
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LIFE

in the classroom

High school renovation project is nearing the finish line

by Mark Jahne
Editor

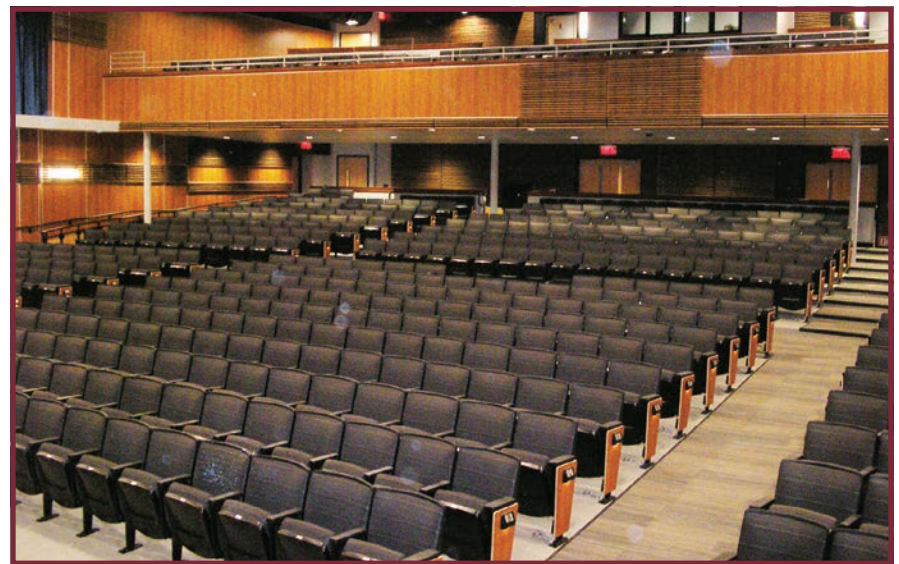
The \$85.5 million Wethersfield High School renovation and expansion project will be complete by the end of 2016, the conclusion of a three-year process.

The gymnasium, media center and auditorium are all new. Classroom wings gradually taken down for a full overhaul are ready for

use. There's plenty left to do, but Principal Thomas Moore is pleased that the end is within sight.

"We're about 80 percent done," he said while leading a tour of the school. "In January, 28 classrooms went off line and 16 classrooms came on board."

The science wing that reopened in January looks different than the



Photos by Mark Jahne

The newly renovated and expanded auditorium at Wethersfield High School now offers mezzanine seating.

wings still awaiting renovation. Like the rest of the completed portion of the project, it boasts much more natural light than in the past.

Most of the remaining work is what Moore calls a punch list of small items, such as spot painting and fixing scratches on columns.

The school was originally built into a hillside and has three floors

on five levels, which created a challenge. Hidden asbestos that was uncovered early in the project caused delays and additional expense.

"There were hidden surprises as we dug," Moore said.

Those surprises included walls, oil tanks and utilities that were not properly mapped when installed.

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Keith Rafaniello, technology director for the Wethersfield Public Schools, pointed out the new digital signs that can be found throughout the school. They offer important announcements, a schedule of upcoming events, athletic team photos and more.

He also noted that games in the gymnasium can be shown on monitors in the hallway so that fans who come out to the lobby or snack stand don't miss any of the action.

Moore said the cafeteria is "much bigger," and he likes the idea that it feels more like a college commons than a traditional high school dining room.

The auditorium is considered the jewel of the entire project. Gone are all the broken chairs. New furniture, the installation of a mezzanine, modern technology and more make it an appealing performance space.

Jeff Roets, a teacher and theater director at the school, said the acoustics are so good that in some cases they don't even need amplification. Former "dead spots" have all been corrected.

There is an audio box that can control 20 individual wireless microphones at the same time. A new digital soundboard in the control room has twice the capacity of the prior technology.

"The acoustics in the room made the biggest difference," he said.

The stage floor is black, not wood colored, making for better viewing and more effective lighting. It can also be used as a black box

kind of stage if desired.

"It saved everybody money and it's what we wanted," Roets said.

The stage is the same size, but a little wing space was gained, he added. There is also an orchestra pit in front so the musicians don't have to be onstage any longer.

"It's a dramatic change, not only for the school, but for the community," Sally Dastoli, district director of curriculum and instruction, said.

She pointed out that Wethersfield Teen Theater will be able to use the auditorium beginning in summer 2017. It has more than 800 seats now; the old auditorium had around 650.

The project was originally scheduled to be finished in time for the new academic year in September, but Moore said the work is running a couple of months behind and a November completion date is more likely. There will be one more classroom shuffle in September.

He added that undertaking this project with a building full of 1,200 students and more than 100 staff has been a great challenge, akin to repairing an airplane while it is in flight. That made it difficult to alter the plans along the way.

"Our staff has been cooperative and patient," he said.

Dastoli said the students adapted well to the disruption and all of the classroom changes and temporary space.

"We continued with the education process," she said.



Jeff Roets, who directs the dramatic productions at the high school, checks out the new sound board.

She is pleased with the new media center and its abundance of natural light. It has computers, iPads and a circular style of design that is designed to encourage students to study collaboratively and form partnerships.

"It's more of a central hub for the building," she said. "What's impressive is the pride students and staff have over the new space."

The media center and gymnasium were built in areas that were previously outside the walls of the former building. The old gym is being utilized as temporary classroom space and will become an auxiliary gym in the end.

The school's culinary arts program has a new area that is designed

like a commercial kitchen. Science classes and lab spaces can now be found in the same rooms.

Moore said changes had to be made to the original plans to incorporate safety requirements that were adopted statewide following the Sandy Brook Elementary School shootings in Newtown.

The tennis courts, currently a construction zone, will be rebuilt over the summer. A new student entrance and parking lot are being created on the north side of the building.

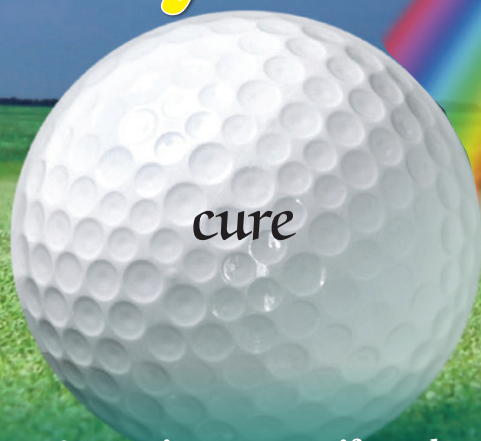
Debt service for this project is being factored into the municipal budget. The town will be reimbursed 50 percent of the overall cost by the state. **WL**

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'Covering important topics'

Senior Citizens Advisory Committee keeps older residents educated and informed

by Mark Jahne
Editor

The many senior citizens who reside in town don't always have the inclination or ability to advocate for themselves, which is where the Senior Citizens Advisory Committee comes in.

The SCAC consists of 13 members appointed by the Town Council, including representatives of senior groups, community organizations and town administrators. The committee's task is to identify the needs of older residents and pass those along to the Town Council for its consideration and action.

The committee is also charged with disseminating information to the senior community, and the

annual information forum it sponsors is one of the ways it fulfills that responsibility.

"This is part of the town charter of [required] committees," SCAC chairwoman Kathi Liberman said.

She also works for the Wethersfield Housing Authority.

Liberman said seniors often had a lot of questions, so the town decided to have an annual spring education forum. They started with topics such as health, funerals and end-of-life issues. Now, the agenda is filled with less daunting items. Members are pleased that attendance at this forum has increased over the years.

"We're still covering important topics," said member Joe Mehan.

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This year, the SCAC is presenting a forum called KISS (Keep It Simple Seniors) from 1-4 p.m. May 12 at the Pitkin Community Center.

Admission is free, but seating is limited, so interested seniors are encouraged to call Lisa Galipo at 860-721-2979 to reserve a chair.

Topics to be covered are electric supplier rates, solar panels, reverse mortgages and assisted living. Basic information about the options will be available as well as a discussion of the pros and cons.

Those interested in the electric supplier part of the program are invited to bring along their electric bill for comparison purposes.

Presenters will represent the CT Green Bank, Public Utilities Regulatory Authority and Atria Greenridge Place. Michael Buchas of the state Department of Banking

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Members of the Senior Citizens Advisory Committee include, from left, Chairwoman Kathi Liberman, Senior Center Coordinator Lisa Galipo and Joe Mehan.

Photo by Mark Jahne

will explain reverse mortgages.

Document shredding will also be available that day from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

SCAC members noted that the general term "senior citizen" actually covers three distinctive groups of people: those who are 100 or older, those in their 80s and 90s, and those between 60 and 80.

Galipo, senior center coordinator and SCAC member, said the commission has its own budget and supports the center and its activities financially. Membership in the Wethersfield Senior Center is approaching 800. **WL**

Meetings of the Senior Citizens Advisory Committee are held the third Thursday of each month at 3 p.m. at the Pitkin Community Center.



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1.) The Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce held its first Business Expo April 7 at the Keeney Memorial Cultural Center. The upstairs ballroom was filled with exhibitors. **2.)** Susan Dumas and Jeff Foley represented Minuteman Press. **3.)** Panera Bread bakery and café provided tasty treats, including some new cookie varieties. Staffing that table are Wendy Kopp, left, and Marie Juergens. **4.)** Volunteer Ken Lesser staffed a table promoting the new Mayor's Charity Ball fundraiser. The first of what organizers hope will become an annual event is scheduled for June 3 at Wethersfield Country Club.

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Tops in the state

Wethersfield High School boys indoor track team wins Class L title

by Mark Jahne
Editor

Wethersfield High School has won numerous championships in boys and girls athletics over the years. Now it can add boys indoor track to the list.

The 2015-16 boys team is the first indoor squad to win the Class L state championship, held Feb. 13 in New Haven. The outdoor track team has four titles to its credit.

Jeff Sanborn is the head coach and Jeff Weber is his assistant. Sanborn also coaches boys cross-country and girls indoor and outdoor track. His WHS coaching career dates from 2005.

Indoor track includes a variety of sprints and relays, as well as long

jump, high jump and shot put. Sanborn said his team focused on being the best in the state from the very beginning of the season.

It came down to the last couple of events at the championship before they secured the victory, he said.

There were 25 other high schools in the Class L competition. Sanborn said the Eagles were strengthened by a talented and experienced group of seniors who led the team to the top.

"This group alone had six school records and some of these records will probably never be broken," he said.

Among the top performers were Lorenzo Burgos, Patrick Hurley, Troy Stegman, Julian Campbell and Elijah



Courtesy Photo

The 2015-16 Wethersfield High School boys indoor track team won the school's first-ever championship in that category.

Young. Burgos, Hurley and Stegman competed in sprints and relays and posted third and fourth place finishes. Campbell finished first in both the long jump and high jump.

Young won first and second place in running events. Sanborn said the young man's times make him one of the 10 fastest high school runners in

the entire country.

"Elijah went on to win New England and was 10th at Nationals," the coach added.

Sanborn also spoke fondly of WHS alumnus Troy Murphy, a professional football player who was fourth in the United States in the triple jump during his high school years. **WL**



Jeremy Hwang, M.D., Ph.D.
Ophthalmology

Saint Francis Welcomes Jeremy Hwang, M.D., Ph.D.

Dr. Hwang, an ophthalmologist, has joined the medical staff at Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center.

Dr. Hwang received his medical degree from Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York, New York. He completed his residency in ophthalmology at the Doheny Eye Institute, University of Southern California Medical Center, Los Angeles, and a fellowship in glaucoma at the Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland.

A member of Solinsky EyeCare, LLC, Dr. Hwang specializes in the medical and surgical management of glaucoma, as well as cataracts and comprehensive ophthalmology.

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by Mark Jahne
Editor

The goal of Autism Families CONNECTicut is to create active lives for children along the autism spectrum. Now, it has a new office and program space where it can do just that.

The nonprofit organization's founders were moved to tears of joy when official ceremonies were

held March 4 to open their first "home" in office space at 600 North Mountain Road in Newington.

Autism Families CONNECTicut was formally registered as a non-profit organization in 2010 but was limited by the fact that it was run out of homes and lacked consistent program space. The new office space will allow it to

Photo by Mark Jahne

Dignitaries cut the ribbon at the opening of the new Autism Families CONNECTicut offices in Newington. The nonprofit has been run out of its founders' homes since its creation six years ago.

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grow to meet the increasing needs of central Connecticut families with children along the autism spectrum.

The organization was founded to provide these children and their families with fun, recreational and social programs.

They are designed to develop social skills, encourage active play, teach new activities and support healthy growth and development.

It all started 12 years ago when Jackie Bailey Procyk gave birth to a son who is on the autism spectrum. Procyk and her mother, Leah Bailey Moon, discovered that there were few programs available to him, so they decided to start their own nonprofit in 2010.

The mother-daughter pair ran everything out of Procyk's home in West Hartford. The family also has a long history in Wethersfield, where Procyk grew up and Moon served on the Town Council.

Procyk continues to serve as program director of Autism Families CONNECTicut. She said the organization has grown enough to allow them not only to rent office space, but to hire a professional executive director, Mary Helen Richer.

Richer joined the organization in October 2014 and has a lengthy background of nonprofit experience.

"For the last six years, we really

have been working around dining room tables and borrowing space," she said.

That style of operation became more difficult as the organization grew. It needed a physical location that could provide space, equipment and room for families to gather.

"We now run six different programs multiple times a year," Richer said. "What we were looking for was space large enough to hold our programs. It needed to be reasonably priced and centrally located."

"To have our own home is just so exciting," Moon added.

The organization serves all of Greater Hartford. Families come from as far away as Stratford and Tolland to participate in its activities.

"We do tailor all the programs especially for children on the spectrum," Procyk said. "We started small. Our programs are unique and we keep the costs very low."

She and Richer are the only staff members. They contract clinicians with specific expertise to assist as needed. Quality programming is always an emphasis.

"They design all of our programs and run all of our programs. We also have a lot of volunteers," Richer said.

"We are just thrilled. It's been a long time coming," Procyk added.

Already on the agenda are running, swimming, dancing, music, building, Friday night teen socials, holiday parties, beach day, Dad's Night Out, Mom's Nights, summer concert night, go-karts, family events and sibling activities. AFC integrates skilled therapists with the expertise of parents in creating its programs.

According to its literature, there are more than 9,000 children and teenagers in Connecticut on the autism spectrum. Agencies that serve them are few in number and many times programs costs are high.

AFC's signature program is called Playing on the Spectrum. Children ages 3 to 13 participate in four-week sessions along with their siblings in the Sibling Club. Structured activities serve to facilitate exercise and motor skills.

Wings with Autism is a program that teaches children with autism how to deal with airport security and boarding an airplane. This is conducted at Bradley International Airport in partnership with airport staff and the Transportation Security Administration.

Autism Families CONNECTicut participants get to attend the dress rehearsal of the annual performance of "The Nutcracker" put on by the

Ballet Theatre Company. They also attend a special sensory-friendly performance of "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" at the Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts.

Town and state officials who attended the ribbon cutting offered a warm welcome to the staff, parents and families in attendance in Newington. Mayor Roy Zartarian called the addition of this nonprofit part of the evolution of North Mountain Road, a mixed-use office park that contains for-profit businesses, a Hindu house of worship and two ethnic social clubs, among others.

"Thank you for choosing Newington. ... We are thrilled to have you here," state Rep. Gary Byron said.

"We're proud to have you as part of our community," added Michael Loscialpo, president of the Newington Chamber of Commerce.

Autism Families CONNECTicut is a member of the Connecticut Autism Action Coalition, Connecticut Association of Nonprofits, Leadership Greater Hartford and the Newington Chamber of Commerce. **WL**

To learn more about the organization call 860-474-3444 or visit autismfamiliesct.org.

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photos courtesy of F. Mark Granato



Wethersfield author F. Mark Granato writes fiction centered on historical events, ranging from the Titanic to the Hartford Hospital fire. For his latest book, "Unleashed," much of his research came from his own experiences in the corporate world in the 1970s and 1980s.

Coming 'Unleashed'

Author releases seventh book, with criticism of corporate culture

by Allie Rivera
Staff Writer

F. Mark Granato sat down at his dining room table, a fire crackling in the adjacent room, and took a deep breath. Before him lay a cup of partially consumed coffee and a copy of his new book "Unleashed," the latest of seven novels he has written since retirement.

"Every time I've written a book, usually it's because there's a hole burning in my gut, usually for years," he said.

Each of his novels have delved into the world of historical fiction, one exploring the 1961 Hartford Hospital fire, another about post-traumatic stress after the Vietnam War, another still about the sinking of the Titanic.

His latest book is a slightly more personal endeavor.

"It took me four drafts to get me out of this. This book is about Kevin Keller, not Mark Granato," he said.

"Unleashed" is also a piece of historical fiction, taking place in the corporate world of the 1970s and 1980s, but the author drew from his own experiences in business in his writing.

"I've been wanting to write a book about my business experiences in a fictional way," Granato said. "There's a part of me that's angry about this or angry about that, but I didn't want it to be a 'Mommy Dearest,' tell-all book."

"Mommy Dearest" was a book penned by Christina Crawford about

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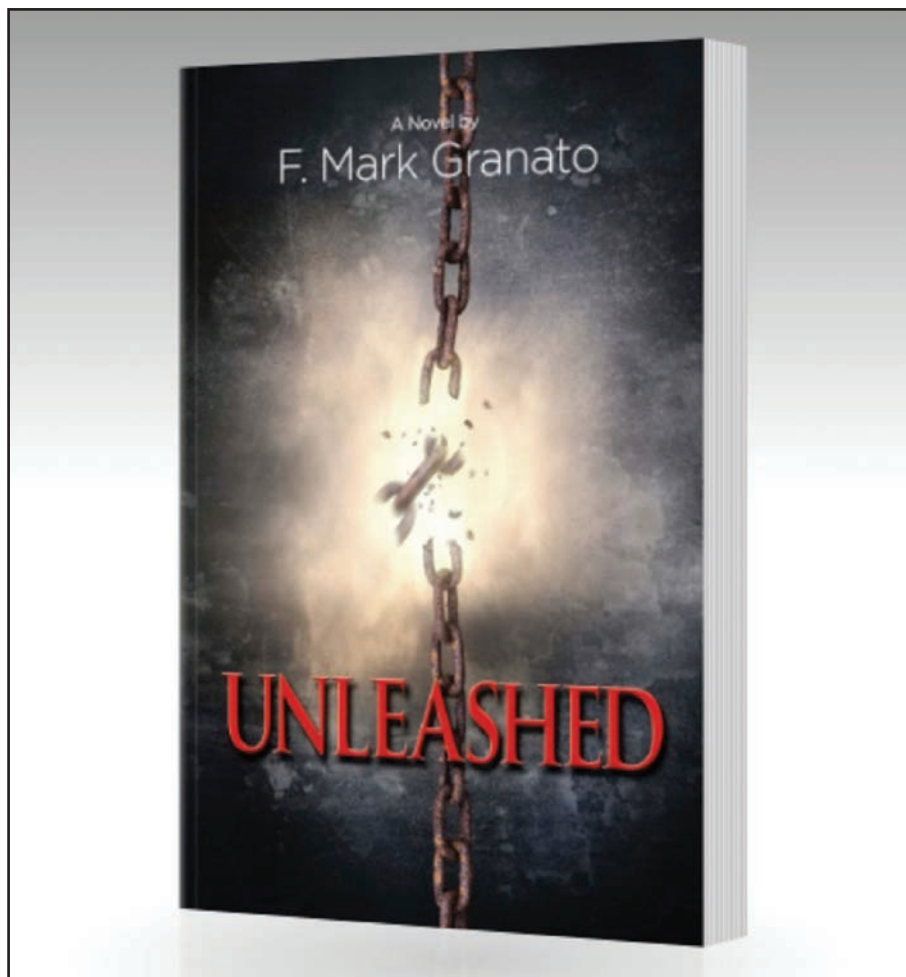
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In his new book, author F. Mark Granato used his own experiences in the corporate world to explore the potential dangers of corporate greed.

her mother, actress Joan Crawford. It told the story of a mother who was a cruel and abusive alcoholic.

Granato firmly believes he has every right to be angry about his experiences. He began his professional career as a journalist, but shortly thereafter he was offered a job at United Technologies as an executive assistant. That not only brought him into an entirely new field, but drastically changed his finances.

"United Technologies, at the time, there was nothing better," he said. "I went from making \$60 a check to \$15,000 a year. I remember I'd cash my paycheck and come home and lay out the hundred dollar bills and say, 'what are we going to do with all this?'"

He had never planned to enter the corporate world in that manner and he soon became engrossed in it.

"I suddenly found myself in this corporate world I'd never been part of before," he said. "It set the hook deep in me and I got reeled in, in a matter of minutes."

As an executive assistant, he was often surrounded by largely influential people in the corporate culture of the

time, which he called vastly different from how it is today.

"If you were CEO of a Fortune 100 company, heaven was a step down," he explained. "They really were gods of the corporate world. The excesses, the abuse of power, the abuse of shareholder value, it was never questioned. These guys just became larger than life."

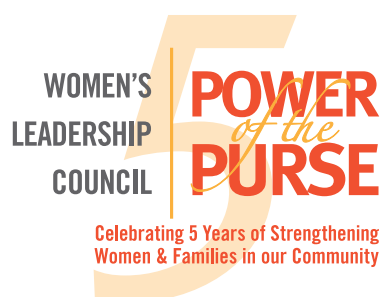
From his position looking up at these leaders, many of his generation began to idolize that lifestyle.

"When you're a poor boy you think, how do I get there?" he said. "Those guys were then replaced by young up-and-coming boomers, guys my age who had seen those excesses and that power, and they made it even worse."

Granato grew within the company, working his way up the corporate ladder, but he said that in many ways he often felt like he didn't fully fit into that way of life, describing himself as a square peg in a round hole.

That idea was solidified, however, on Dec. 21, 1988 following the fatal crash of Pan Am Flight 103 over Scotland, what later became known as

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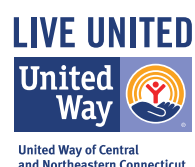


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the Lockerbie bombing. That evening, United Technologies hosted its annual staff Christmas party.

"All the cubicle dwellers would come upstairs and we'd have an awkward Christmas party," Granato recalled.

A public relations employee sought Granato out and informed him that the plane, which had engines created by United Technologies, had gone down over Scotland with 240 people on board, including 22 students from Syracuse University returning from studying abroad. No one survived.

While it has since been learned that Libyan terrorists were responsible for the tragedy, at the time the cause of the crash was unknown.

It was Granato's job to gain as much information as possible to brief the company's chairman on the situation.

"His first response was, 'Goddammit, do you know what this is going to do to our share prices tomorrow?'" Granato recalled, pausing at the gravity of his words.

"Never a mention, never a comment about those 250 people, two weeks before Christmas. Twenty-two kids from Syracuse. I remember looking at this guy and I was stunned. It was the first time I realized I didn't belong. It suddenly dawned on me that that wasn't me at all," he said.

Despite his unease with the culture that he thought of as increasingly heartless, he stayed in the business and continued to climb higher in the company.

"There's something to be said about the poverty of affluence," he said, saying that he felt he had to continue working to maintain the life he had created. By devoting so much of his time to work, he often felt he was not there for his family.

"For 25 years, I watched people sell their souls for a dollar," he said. "The price you pay is giving up more and more of you, but you get paid more and more to do it."

As his career continued, his job became more difficult for him to perform on a moral level.

"We became a non-manufacturing country in less than a decade," he said. "You came to work every day with the intention of cutting costs and the only way you could really cut costs is by cutting people. That's what it all became," he said.

It was that sense of corporate greed to the detriment of employees

that sparked his new novel.

"That's the heartbeat of where 'Unleashed' came from," Granato said. "I started from a place where I realized how unhappy I was with the corporate world and what it stood for and what it became."

The book tells the fictional story of Kevin Keller, an employee at a large corporation in the 1970s and 1980s who discovers that the leadership in his company is using corporate loopholes and shady business tactics to make more money for those at the top. His discovery puts not only his life in danger, but the lives of his family members.

"He discovers himself and what his real values are," Granato said. "At the same time, he's not really a hero because his only goal in this life is vengeance. His only intent is to destroy the company and, mostly, the people who destroyed his life."

That idea of not being a hero was also an aspect that set this novel apart from the others he has published.

"The six books I'd written prior to this all had a hero. They've always been focused on an unlikely hero," he said. "In my 25 years of experience in the corporate world, I could not identify anyone, any colleague or associate, that I thought of as a hero."

Many of the ideas for the novel were drawn from real experiences, but he stressed that his writing is fictional and was not meant in any way to go after the company for which he worked.

"It's a story about a young man who represents a lot of young men," he said. "This is not about me versus United Technologies. This is about one man versus corporate greed."

Despite the dark tones of his novel, he does hold out hope for the future of corporate America, mainly due to the millennials he addresses in the forward of his book.

"It was only when I retired that I started to see a new breed of people coming in," he said.

"Frankly, they didn't care for the excesses and the management style. And they weren't brats, this was well thought out. These were people who were questioning why and not being satisfied with 'because I said so.'"

He often thinks back to the night of that Christmas party as a turning point in his life and is grateful that he was able to come out on the other side with his humanity. **WL**

"Unleashed" is available online at fmarkgranato.com.

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News roundup

Flags will honor veterans

The GFWC-Newington/Wethersfield Woman's Club is conducting its annual "Flags of Appreciation" fundraiser to benefit veterans and current members of the armed forces.

Personalized flags in memory of, or in honor of, specific individuals will be displayed, in alphabetical order, May 28 at Garfield and Mazzocchi Way in Newington along the Newington Memorial Day Parade route and at the Broad Street Green near the reviewing stand along the Wethersfield Memorial Day Parade route.

Flags, available for \$10 each, may be ordered through May 13. Application forms containing mailing and check information will be available at Newington Parks and Recreation, the Newington Senior & Disabled Center and Wethersfield Parks and Recreation.

For more information call 860-788-3415 or email hough_john_c@hotmail.com.

Apartment fire quashed

The Wethersfield Volunteer Fire Department responded to a report of a fire on a third floor balcony at 73 Village Drive in the Village at Wethersfield Apartments on March 24. The first responding units reported heavy smoke and fire coming from a third floor apartment.

Due to the intensity of the fire and the number of apartments potentially involved, the incident

commander requested a task force assignment from surrounding towns that brought additional apparatus and firefighters to the scene.

Interior fire crews discovered that the main body of heavy fire was in the attic space above the ceiling. Truck 22 and Truck 32 quickly brought the fire under control.

The result was major fire and structural damage to several apartments, as well as heavy water and smoke damage to the majority of apartments in that building.

"My first concern was getting everybody out," Fire Chief Rich Bailey said. "The guys made a hell of a stop, considering the amount of fire over our heads."

He is grateful that no one was hurt and also for the support of task force responders from Newington, Rocky Hill, Berlin, Cromwell and Glastonbury.

Chamber schedules annual meeting

The Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce will host its Annual Meeting and Town Awards Dinner at 5:30 p.m. May 11 at the Wethersfield Country Club. Award winners will be announced soon.

The evening features a cocktail hour, buffet dinner and cash bar. Advance reservations are required. For further details email wethersfield@sbcglobal.net or visit wethersfieldchamber.com.

Aiding the children



1. Members of the GFWC Newington/Wethersfield Woman's Club delivered more than 100 new pajamas and 70 children's books to the Prudence Crandall Center in New Britain March 29. Shown, from left, are Gabrielle Nadeau, Diane Rickenbacker, Jo Late and Carolyn Jasper.

Benfield talks about snow leopards

Richard Benfield of Wethersfield, a professor of geography at Central Connecticut State University and member of the Snow Leopard Trust, will give a talk about snow leopards at 7 p.m. April 28. The location is the Connecticut Audubon Society, 1361 Main St., South Glastonbury.

Adapted to handle harsh conditions, these animals live in solitude across vast distances of rugged and mountainous terrain in central Asia. They are seldom observed in the wild, earning them the nickname "ghosts of the mountains."

Admission is \$5 for Connecticut

Audubon members and \$10 for non-members. Donations will be solicited for the Snow Leopard Trust and Panthera.

Town creates Mayor's Charity Ball

A group of volunteers has created a new event in town called the Mayor's Charity Ball. Modeled after a successful event held for the past 17 years in West Hartford, the non-partisan, non-political event is intended to allow residents an opportunity to have a fancy night out while raising funds for local charities.

The first ball is scheduled for 6 p.m. June 3 at Wethersfield Country Club. Individual tickets are priced at \$75 and the beneficiary is the town's food pantry. There will be cocktails, a raffle, silent auction, dinner and dancing.

Individual and corporate sponsorships are available at various levels. The Richard M. Keane

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Foundation is assisting with getting this new venture off the ground.

Ken Lesser and Mayor Paul Montinieri are co-chairmen of the Mayor's Charity Ball. Call Cindy Greenblatt at 860-563-6762 for tickets and sponsorship information.

Maintain your property

The town zoning enforcement and property maintenance officer reminds homeowners of their responsibilities under local law. The first requirement is that grass and weeds must be trimmed to a height of 8 inches or less.

Trailers, boats and recreational vehicles may be parked in the rear yard if not longer than 18 feet. They must also be five feet from rear and side property lines. Anything larger requires a special town permit or off-site storage.

Cars must be parked in designated driveways, not on the grassy lawn or snow shelf (the area between the sidewalk and the street). Solid waste and recyclables may not be placed at the curb more than 48 hours before the scheduled collection day and time.

Health district stresses bicycle safety

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1.7

million Americans develop a traumatic brain injury every year. Many of these injuries can be prevented with the use of properly-fitted helmets.

The Central Connecticut Health District sells bicycle helmets year-round that come in a variety of colors for children and adults, ranging from toddler sizes to adult XL.

The cost is \$10. They are available for purchase at the Central Connecticut Health District in Wethersfield town hall. For further information call 860-721-2822.

Arts academy happenings

The Wethersfield Academy for the Arts hosts a two-part lecture May 17 and 24 on "How Printed Pictures Changed the World" with Prof. Alexandra Onuf. Highlights will include prints by Martin Schongauer, Albrecht Dürer, Lucas van Leyden and Andrea Mantegna, as well as prints after famous compositions by the likes of Raphael and Michelangelo.

A workshop called "Botanicals in Watercolor" with Leslie Watson will be held from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. May 12-14. "Still Life in Pastels" with Brian Bailey happens from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. May 19-21.

Following that is "Plein Air Landscape" with John McDonald

from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. June 9-11. "Plein Air Garden Painting" with Christina Mastrangelo is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. June 18.

The final spring workshop is the "Landscape in Watercolor" with Leslie Watson from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. June 23-25. The academy is located at 431 Hartford Ave. For more information visit wethersfieldarts.org.

Renters can get rebate

The application period is now open for the Elderly & Totally Disabled Renters' Rebate program. To arrange for an appointment, call the town Social & Youth Services Department at 860-721-2977 Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Members of the Social Services Staff will be at the following complexes to take applications: First Church Village, 117 Wells Road, July 26, 9 a.m. to noon; Wethersfield Housing Authority, 60 Lancaster Road, Aug. 30, 9 a.m. to noon; Harvey Fuller Apartments, 31 Butler St., Aug. 9, 9 a.m. to noon; Executive Square, June 7 and 21 and Sept. 13, 9 a.m. to noon; Lasher Court Apartments, 333 Maple St., May 24, 9 a.m. to noon and Nathan Hale Apartments, 1532-1534 Berlin

Turnpike, May 10, 9 a.m. to noon and 1-3 p.m.

Take a historic walk

The Wethersfield Historical Society hosts a series of historic walking tours. The cost is \$5, free to society members. Reservations are recommended.

Burying Ground Tours with Martha Smart begin May 12 and continue June 16, Sept. 22 and Oct. 27 from 1-2:30 p.m.; also May 14, June 18, Sept. 24 and Oct. 29 from 10-11:30 a.m. Meet at the red barn in the First Church parking lot.

Walk around Old Wethersfield with Dorene Ciarcia and learn about the architecture and the people who lived there long ago. Meet in front of the Keeney Memorial Cultural Center, 200 Main St.

These walks are scheduled for 6 p.m. May 5, July 7 and Sept. 15 and 10 a.m. May 7, July 9 and Sept. 17.

Library holiday closing

The Wethersfield Library will be closed May 29-30 for the Memorial Day holiday. It will resume its regular hours May 31. Those hours are 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, and 1-5 p.m. Sunday. **WL**

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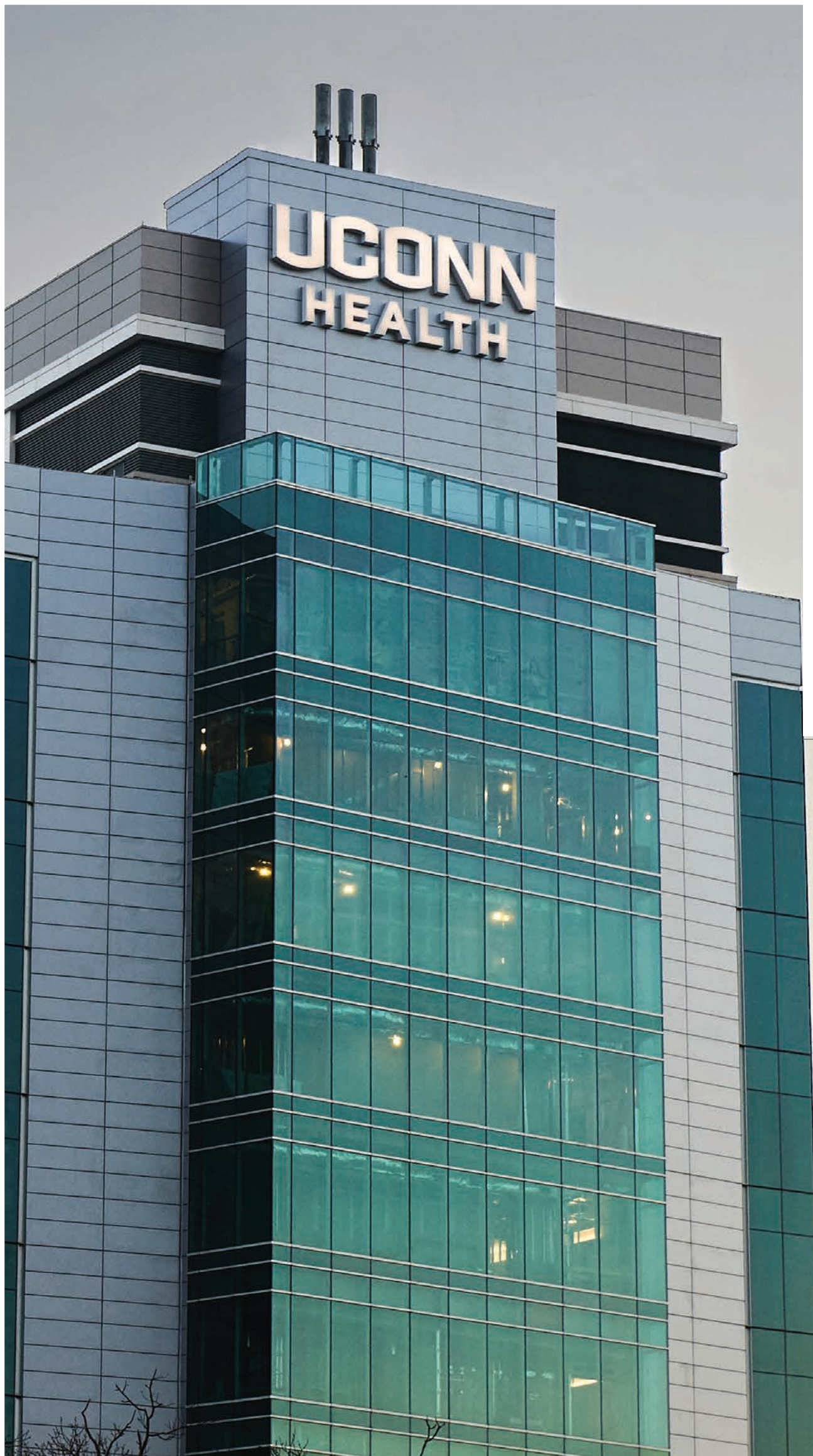
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Events *spotlight*

Good 'Ole Fishing Derby

April 30, 8 a.m. to noon

Spring Street Pond

860-721-2952

The town Parks and Recreation Department, in collaboration with Connecticut Outfitters, the Metropolitan District Commission, UNICO and the Wethersfield Game Club, will sponsor this annual fishing derby for Wethersfield children in grades K-6. Bring your own fishing pole and bait or purchase bait on site. Loaner poles will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Admission is free, but advance registration is requested. This can be done at town hall, Connecticut Outfitters or on the Parks and Recreation website. Prizes will be awarded.



Spring Book Sale

April 30 and May 1
Wethersfield Library
515 Silas Deane Highway
860-257-2811 or
wethersfieldlibrary.org

The Friends of the Wethersfield Library present their spring book sale, with bargains on donated books in numerous categories and special sections for children, biographies and cookbooks. A preview party will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. April 28 with an admission fee of \$5; admission is free on Saturday and Sunday. Saturday hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday hours are 1-4 p.m. Buy a bag on Sunday and fill it with books for only \$5.

Senior Citizens Advisory Committee KISS Event

May 12, 1-4 p.m.

Pitkin Community Center
30 Greenfield St.
860-721-2979

KISS (Keep It Simple Seniors) is designed to answer basic questions on everyday topics. Learn the pros and cons of solar panels, compare electric rate options, get the facts about reverse mortgages and find out the details of assisted living services. Document shredding will also be available that day from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Admission to the seminar is free, but seating is limited. Call now to reserve a seat.

Keane Foundation/UNICO Golf

May 16, 11 a.m.

Wethersfield Country Club
76 Country Club Road
860-529-5697 or 860-563-3387

Help the Keane Foundation and Wethersfield UNICO raise money for charitable causes while enjoying a day of golf. It all starts with lunch followed by a shotgun start and scramble format of play. The cost is \$175 per golfer and includes golf, dinner, various prizes, a raffle and an auction. WFSB-TV 3 personality Scot Haney will serve as the auctioneer. Checks should be made payable to the Keane Foundation and mailed to UNICO/Keane Foundation Golf Tournament, P.O. Box 290370, Wethersfield, CT 06129-0370. Various levels of sponsorship are available.

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Slice of LIFE

Photos by Allie Rivera



The Keeney Memorial Cultural Center was abuzz with activity April 9 for the 11th Annual Taste of Wethersfield, hosted by the Wethersfield Historical Society. The tasty evening serves as a fundraiser for the society.

Representatives from local restaurants and businesses provided samples of their food and beverages.



Taste of Wethersfield

1. Lisa Dennis, manager of the Wethersfield TD Bank, and Dave Olinda, manager of the Sedgwick Plaza branch in West Hartford, were on hand to pass out pens, lip balm and other trinkets. **2.** Amanda Martin sat at one of the first tables that visitors saw giving out samples from Jonathan Edwards Winery. **3.** The table for the Old Wethersfield Country Store, staffed by John and Megan Jakubowski, offered visitors a wide variety of sweet treats. **4.** Gina, left, and Mariana Luari passed out samples of Greek yogurt parfaits with fresh fruit, an offering from The Place 2 Be restaurant. **5.** Owner Julia Koulouris, left, and Katherine Parker, a barista and prep chef, created an entire display for the Heirloom Market at Comstock Ferre, complete with coffee, juice and baked goods. **6.** Carol Maffucci, left, owner of Vito's Restaurant, eagerly passed out samples of her food with the help of Haruka Tamura, center, and Jon Bonds. **7.** Brian Yurczyk, left, and Jacob Houlihan of Carbone's Ristorante served plates of pasta. **8.** Julie Sapia, left, owner of Ascot Catering, distributed bite-sized samples with the help of Cindy Sousa. **9.** The Hot Cat Jazz Band was back again, playing a variety of upbeat jazz standards. **10.** Matthew Zabor of Sid Wainer and Son offered a variety of artisanal cheeses at his table. **11.** For Jon and Tina Weiner, the evening provided a night of great food and delicious drinks for a good cause.



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May

calendar

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

6 Drop-in Playtime/Storytime, 10 a.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org, also May 13, 20 and 27

7 Fandom Fun, 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org, also May 14, 21 and 28

7 Wethersfield Art Day, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Wethersfield Academy for the Arts, 431 Hartford Ave., info@wethersfieldarts.org

12 Senior Citizens Advisory Committee KISS Event, 1-4 p.m., Pitkin Community Center, 30 Greenfield St., 860-721-2979

14 Saturday Cinema: "The Miracle of Morgan's Creek," 1:30 p.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

14 150 Prospect Coffeehouse, 6:30 p.m., Wethersfield United Methodist

Church, 150 Prospect St., 860-614-5158 or tanjam@comcast.net

16 Keane Foundation/UNICO Golf Tournament, 11 a.m. Wethersfield Country Club, \$175 per golfer, 860-529-5697 or 860-563-3387

17 Friends of the Wethersfield Library, 7 p.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

19 Understanding Your Best Friend, 6:30 p.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

24 Library Board, 7 p.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

24 GFWC Newington/Wethersfield Woman's Club, 7 p.m., Newington Senior & Disabled Center, 120 Cedar St., Newington, 860-666-4371

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Fire department holds wine tasting



1.) The Wethersfield Fire Fighters Association, the social arm of the volunteer fire department, held its annual wine tasting fundraiser March 31 at the Pitkin Community Center. Doug Bowie of Waypoint Spirits in Bloomfield shows off his company's vodka and gin. **2.)** Fever, a musical group composed of students who attend Wethersfield High School, provided live music, covering a variety of eras. **3.)** Volunteer firefighters Mark Mahder and Jim Ritter greet one another.



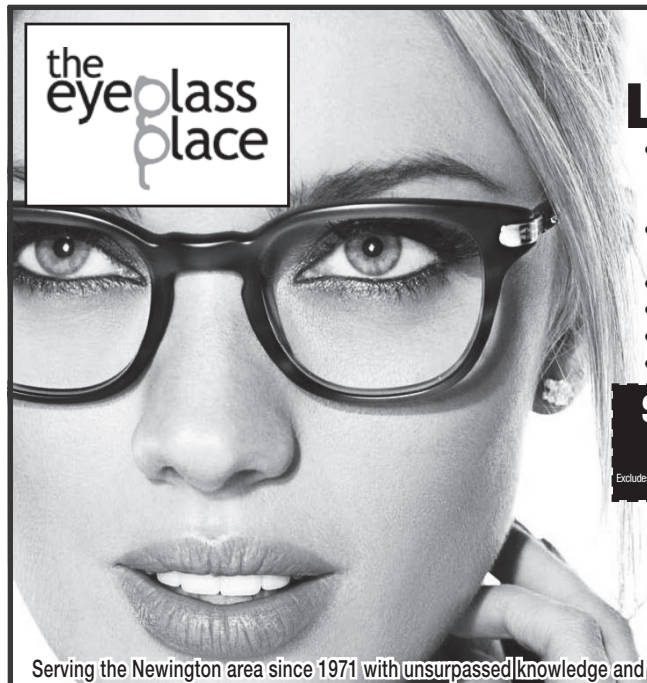
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• Rocky Hill Life • Wethersfield Life • Glastonbury Life • Newington Life

Students honored for their academic success

The following pupils were named to the honor roll for the second quarter at Wethersfield High School

High Honors Grade 9

Jordan Adduci, Aiden Ademi, Fritz Aguiar, Ajla Ahmetovic, Vanessa Ajodhi, Dino Alihodzic, Hope Allen, Allison Appel, Justin Biraci, Alec Capasso, Kacia Claffey-Hesseltine, Marissa Colangelo-Deluca, Kayla Cruz, Austin DellaFera, Katharine Edwards, Auna Foster, Abigail Francis, Kathryn Galusha, Katherine Ginter, Amayia Giscombe, Sarah Gordon, Lucyne Grigorian, Anthony Guerrera, Jeremy Halla, Liam Harrington, Shannon Hattie, Matthew Iallonardo, Luke Johnson, Jared Kauffman, Gabrielle Klementon, Agron Konjusha, Anthony Ky, Matthew Laurie, Yasmin Lazu, Jacob Lepore, Leah Lin, Joshua Malizia, Lauren McAlister, Emily McKenna, Tanya Messenger, Anthony Milluzzo, Emma Moore, Kenan Mujic, Nicole Murphy, Lejla Muskic, Sasha Parmanand, Alyssa Pearce, Alyssa Prosperi, Erin Robles, Isabella Scandura, John Schiavone, Masala Solinis, Jaedyn Stanescski, Katherine Stearley, Kaitlyn Swoverland, Ariana Tessier, Elizabeth Veilleux, Connor Wallowitz, Owen Weaver, Haley Wheelchel, Mei Xue, Christina Yanaros and Sophia Zagaja.

Grade 10

Elena Anderson, Grant Anderson, Emma Augustine, Madelyn Barone, Shawn Bertucio, AnnaJane Brown, Eric Bucknam, Rachel Bugella, Rebecca Buonopane, Ling Chi, Isabel Correa, Justin Cruz, Lindsey Davoren, Stephanie DeCarli, Joseph DiCioccio, Thomas Dowd, Jacob Driscoll, Nathan Everett, Adnan Fejzic, Julia Feliciano, Jessica Garofalo, Lily Gaunt, Amanda Gilbert, Tyler Gomes, Brian Heaven, Nathan Hrdy, Gabriela Interian, Samantha Johnson, Devon Kleeblatt, Samuel Lemaire, Caroline Logan, Henry Lopez, Juliana Mandile, Malena Mandile, Heather Mayo, Maria Moldovan, Maya Mulholland, Atlee Myers, Anna O'Neil, William Odell, Rahman Osmanovic, Leah Ostergren, Micaela Pereyra, Chelsea Pinchera, Jessica Pratt, Sara Puglielli, Jane Rumley, Jason Sharp, Tessa Slesinski, Will Stabach, Maura Stewart, Tyler Stout, Abigail Sullivan, James Sullivan, Kaleigh Sullivan, Wing Sze, Alexandra Talarczyk, Megan Tonucci, Amanda Tougas, Trinita White and Emma Zaleski.

Grade 11

Lily Bello, Victoria Brazel, Jack

Breton, Chianna, Jacob Colbath, Audrey Coleman, Caroline Coyne, Kyle Flynn, Dorris Gallari, Lindsey Gordon, Kaleigh Hart, Kaitlyn Irace, Idalis Irizarry, Matthew Jablonka, Matthew Keefe-Stefanik, Lynne Landers, Jordan Laske, Timothy Laurito, Kerry Lindquist, Justin Michaud, Amiel Monasterial, Emma Peak, Connor Peterson, Brianna Platania, Christopher Santos, Joyce Santos, Andrew Sanzaro, Alyssa Schroll, Nora Serrao, Hsa Shee, Trisha Signorello, Gabriela Silva, Jacklyn Snide, Sabrina Torres, Sarina Tucker, Samantha Urban, Ricardo Velez, Jocelyn Wilcox, Yiqian Zhuo and Jillian Zuidema.

Grade 12

Alicia Ademi, Kris Agolli, Sara Aguilar, Claudia Barone, Alexander Bartis, Briley Bartone, Gabrielle Bielak, Valentina Birritta, Andrea Bucknam, Dilan Cabral, Lauren Cardenas, Alexandria Casertano, Matthew Colangelo, Leiah Cutkomp, David Dale, Abigail Davis, Kevin Davoren, Christina DeAngelo, Emma Detrick, Zoe Direnzo, Carter Dizes, Stephanie Emmanuel, Kristina Ercolani, Rosmarie Faienza, Katerina Ficara, Margaret Fitzpatrick, Sophie Fortunato, Pierre Franklin, Kacey Friedman, Dareca Garib, Taylor Garrey, Sawyer Gaunt, Max Gentino, Emily Gjuzi-Pantaleon, Dante Goddard, Peter Hahn, Destini Hall, Joshua Halla, Edin Hamidovic, Natalie Heaven, Rebecca Hine, Megan Hoisl, Andrew Hrdy, Nick Huynh, Roxanne Jacobs, Jacob Johnson, Taylor Jones, Redona Karamanaj, Hazim Korkutovic, Katherine Lamberti, Caroline Logozzo, Adam Lynch, Julia Martin, Parker Maulucci, Anna Mayo, Matthew McAlister, Sydney Mercier, Amadea Mitusina, Abigale Monasterial, Arva Nerenxa, Connie Nguyen, Grace Nichols, Andrew Nicki, Ansley Nix, Madelyn O'Connor, Hailey Olesen, Mariana Oliveira, Navarre Pratt, Kaeleigh Rakus, Michaela Ranniello, Jose Rivera, Gabriela Rizzo-Velez, Adriana Rotondo, Venezia Santoro, Jessie Sanzo, Taylor Scutari, Brianna Shive, Diana Sitnik, Jacob Skowronek, James Slayton, Devon Smith, Joseph Sottile, Colin Stewart, Meaghan Szilagyi, Alyssa Tonucci, Michael Trinh, Andrew Turgeon, Allison Weed, Matthew Wilson, Karol Wroblewski and Michelle Yanaros.

Honors Grade 9

Mark Accarpio, Matthew Accarpio, Zoe Adams, Grace Amoruso, Alec Arnold, Allison Ayers, Kate Ayers, Mark Bagdasarian, Robert Balesano, Sedina Begic, Jack Blaisdell, Monica Bongiovanni, Ajalon Brereton, Mairead Breton, Alex Chodorowski, Madison Cipolla, Danielle Colbath, David Colon, Paige Contenta, Evan Copeland,

Cameron Corazzo, John Cravero, Tyler DellaFera, Olivia Destefani, Matthew Domonkos, Thomas Drake, Brianna Dreger, Afton Dyjak, Cameron Elliott, Craig Elliott, Annisa Ferguson, Maya Gainty, David Garcia, Deandre Garib, Sofia Giarratana, Katelyn Glendon, Aliza Gul, Nicholas Hetherman, Holden Hoon, Tai Huynh, Luca Isaila, Madeline Johnson, Alexander Jones, Anna Kallajian, Brian Kanya, Megan Keleher, Luke Kelleher, Brooke Kycia, Nathan Labbe, Cassandra Landry, Tatum Lewis-Holcombe, Ricardo Lima, Gavin Lippitt, Emily Litke, Anthony Lopez, Michael Manousos, Patrick Martin, Sarah Maya, Hannah McGrath, Melisa Mirzayev, Erin Nargi, Dylan Olesen, Jenesis Ortiz, Sydney Ouellette, Daniel Parker, Foram Patel, Madison Patkoske, Jake Peckrul, Marina Pernoi, Chit Po, Mitchell Quadrato, Emily Raffalo, Mark Rich, Wilmer Rivera-Ortiz, Ryan Rodrigues, Jenna Sanzo, Jason Scalora, Jacob Schlapfer, Mackenzie Scutari, Dimitri Shaposhnikov, Aidan Stec, Alexis Szymecki, Shantall Teran, John Tine, Angelica Velez, Shun Wong and Ryan Zwick.

Grade 10

Rachael Amoruso, Nicholas Arcata, Brendan Barry, Sabrina Berry, Alexander Bielak, Ashley Bilello, Timothy Blaisdell, Safiye Boluk, Zachary Bonfiglio, Austin Bovino, Kendall Cathcart, Benjamin Cholewa, Julia Chrostowski, Spencer Clift, Liam Collins, Joshua Cronkhite, Jessica Darby, Odalys DeJesus, Jennifer Denz, Rossano DiGiacomo, Alexandra Dizes, McKayla Dreger, Fatija Duric, Danielle Elliott, Maricielo Fabian, Derrick Fields, Christine Gallares, Ismael Garcia, Joshua Gray, Aldin Handzic, Kenneth Harrison, Tatiana Henry, Camden Johnson, Brian Kallajian, Alexis Kallicharan, Christian Karkos, Conor Keane, Caroline Kennedy, Petrit Kerci, Ethan Krol, Katrina Kurpaska, Irene Laramie, Timothy Malave, Hannah Martin, Ryan McCarthy, Marlena Monroe, Julia Morrissey, Lexi Munger, James O'Connor, Filip Ogniewski, Andrew Pace, Peter Paruta, Evan Presta, Olivia Purinton, Jacqueline Reategui, Juliana Rosa, Luke Saharek, Nilshali Sanchez, Brianna Santilli, Kaitlyn Sargis, Rachel Sargis, Cassandra Scalora, Isabella Schroeder, Brenna Shannahan, Nathaniel Sommers, Alex Tawrel, Samuel Tenney, Nicole Teti, Eric Torres, Garrett Tougas, Samantha Vargas, Mallory Walker, Haley Weinberg, Victoria Whitaker, Rachel Wilson, Karolina Wlaz and Olivia Zurzola.

Grade 11

Kady Allen, Sean Arcouette, Stephanie Ayers, Holly Babineau, Rachel Bahouth, Anthony Berry, Taylor Bradley,

Jeana Bruno, Melanie Burns, Anna Cannata, Vanessa Carbone, Mariana Carcia, Andrew Console, Megan Darrell, Avishek Das, Hannah Desrochers, Molly Desrochers, Fiona Dunn, JinTao Feng, Jessalyn Figueroa, Maeve Foley, Griffin Grabowski, Collin Grottke, Lauren Hubschmitt, Abimael Jimenez, Alexander Kauffman, Kathleen Kerekes, Jaden Krueger, Amina Kuljancic, Kelly Lamo, Marissa Landry, Nicholas Laramie, Megan Lauzon, Sarah Lawler, Jeremy Levesque, Aleah Livingston, Erica MacLean, Caleigh Martin, Katherine McDonald, Olivia McGrath, Benjamin Milano, Emma Moller, Ashley Morrell, Allison Nargi, Aidan Nelson, Elvira Osmanovic, Kate Parker, Andrey Patinha, Matthew Pazdziora, Isabella Petrella, Braden Plant, Zana Preniqi, Madeline Raffalo, Madison Raposo, Jessica Roberts, Samantha Rosa, Steven Santos, Aidan Sitler, Jessica Sitler, Katherine Skowronek, Peter Skowronek, Angela Sollima, Austin Stefano, Lukas Szymecki, Roshanay Tahir, Morgan Tanguay, Bianca Tata, Olivia Tyler, Casey Urso, Christian Venditti, Payton Viner and Brian Weed.

Grade 12

Brian Adames, Alyssa Ajodhi, Natalie Albrecht, Madison Albright, Lauren Arienza, Nicholas Bialka, Zachary Birdsall, Luis Bolorin, Vincenzo Bongiovanni, Cassidy Bourassa, Micah Burnett, Matthew Burwell, Elizabeth Byrne, Rachel Caruk, Veronica Catricala, Lillian Ciarletto, Matthew Cloutier, Zachary Confalone, Santa Cruz, Alyssa DiFiore, Gloria Dishnica, David Edwards, Christina Faienza, Vincent Fazio, Kristina Feliciano, Katie Fierro, Katherine Flynn, Harris Gallari, Taylor Galusha, Ian Gingrave, Madison Giolito, Aleysia Green, Daniel Griffin, Thomas Griffin, Alexis Gwynn, Fatima Haider, Jacob Hickey, Joshua Hinostroza, Patrick Hurley, Alexis Irizarry, Alyja Kelly, Michael Kelly, Tate Knapp, Leonie Koellmer, Amanda Lamore, Paige Landers, Benjamin Lepo, Feng Lin, Brendan Livingston, Rachel Llorens, Leah MacFarlane, Anthony Machado, Jessica MacLean, Jack Malizia, Toryn Malone, Christopher Manousos, Mitchell Marena, Michael Motuzick, Xheni Muco, Hayley Orkins, Bhavya Patel, Kishan Patel, Carissa Peckrul, Daniel Purinton, Jake Reichelt, Katharine Reilly, Charles Renaud, Jordan Rivera, Jared Salemi, Gina Santapaola, Gabriella Scacca, Gianna Scandura, Daniel Schroeder, Caroline Schryver, Christopher Shimwell, Joshua Smith, Troy Stegman, Maura Stickley, Luke Surawski, Colin Tyler, Valentina Valencia, Kemal Velic, Gianmarco Venditti, Rachel Way, Eric Wright and Maya Yurko. **WL**

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Super snacks

Healthy, fun treats your kids will love

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

Every parent knows the plaintive cry of “I’m hungry; what’s there to eat?” Whether it’s after school or for a summer playdate, snacks can be an important nutrition boost, or even a fun project.

“Snacks are considered mini-meals and help children focus at school, on homework and provide them with energy, vitamins and minerals to grow along with satisfying their hunger monster. Snacks are a great way for kids to enjoy fruits, vegetables, yogurt and other foods they may not be getting at their regular meals. Make sure to offer snacks that contain both protein and fiber such as a clementine and a cheese stick. Snacks help children refuel between meals and satisfy their appetites,” noted Beth Chatfield, clinical dietitian with Connecticut Children’s Medical Center, who also works with the CCMC Specialty Care Center in Farmington.

“As a professionally trained chef, one of my greatest joys is being in the kitchen and experimenting with new recipes. Over the past several months, I have been focusing most of my experimentation on recipes that appeal to kids,” said Rita Neal, a mother of two.

She helped a group of parents organize Growing Great Schools, with a mission to promote

childrens’ and family wellness

“One of the ways Growing Great Schools does this is by offering get-COOKing, a program that teaches kids and teens how to cook. In addition, getCOOKing focuses on where food actually comes from, why it’s important to eat local, seasonal foods and food traditions,” Neal said.

In addition to creating recipes, Neal also likes to keep easy-to-grab foods for snacks, including apple slices, red pepper slices, carrot sticks, celery sticks, sliced cheddar cheese, clementines, frozen edamame in pods, nuts, bananas and other fruit.

“Strawberries and mangos are always a hit. Variety is key. Tastes change due to the season, mood swings and other unseen forces. The above list is what I think of as ‘fast food,’ she said.

Of course, having healthy foods on hand and getting kids to eat them are two different things, even when you’re an accomplished chef. Executive Chef Jeffrey Gordon of Stew Leonard’s in Newington, said that when his kids were in elementary and middle schools, he would go into their classrooms and make fun dishes.

“Meanwhile, they won’t eat anything unless it’s brown,” he said of his kids who are now 17 and 20. “With my son, if it’s not pizza or pasta or some type of brown substance, it’s still really tough and I’m

trained at what I do.”

Trying to get extra nutrition such as protein and iron into his daughter’s diet has been another challenge. She is an athlete and also has low iron levels.

“She loves smoothies, and basically I’ve been able to switch the ingredients around, where she doesn’t know they’re in there. I’m looking for how do I get the vitamins and minerals and things they need to make them healthy, to help with their brain growth and their endurance.”

Gordon said that younger children are often interested in the cooking process and want to be involved, such as decorating gingerbread men.

“A kid, especially in elementary school, loves to be interactive with whatever you’re making. I think kids want to be part of the mix,” he said.

LIFE spoke to several chefs in the area to get some of their favorite, original recipes for making snacks for kids. And if you’re thinking ahead to summer, another session of get-COOKing at the Mandell JCC in West Hartford will be held the week of August 18. The program is sponsored by Growing Great Schools, based in West Hartford. For information visit growinggreatschools.org.

Chatfield has developed the following recipes. For more ideas, she recommends checking out snacks from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics online.

Tortilla Pizzas

Ingredients:

- small whole wheat tortillas
- salsa
- shredded cheddar cheese

optional toppings (beans, cilantro, chopped green peppers, chopped black olives)

Directions:

Place tortilla on foil-lined tray and mound the salsa and cheese on each tortilla. Cook in oven or toaster oven until cheese is melted and edges of tortilla are browned. Add a dollop of sour cream or guacamole if desired.

Multi-Layer Parfait in a Cup

Ingredients:

- seedless grapes, quartered
- plain nonfat Greek yogurt
- diced pears or any other fruit (strawberries, blueberries, mandarin oranges)
- granola
- roasted pumpkin seeds
- 2 teaspoons maple syrup

Directions:

Layer all ingredients, dividing equally in mini containers

Executive Chef Jeffrey Gordon of Stew Leonard’s in Newington has developed the following recipes, testing them on his toughest customers – his own kids.

Chef Jeff’s Power Punch Smoothie

Ingredients:

- 1/3 cup almond milk
- 6-8 strawberries, stems removed
- 1 whole banana
- 1 tbsp. blackstrap molasses
- 1 tbsp. agave nectar or honey
- ½ cup crushed ice

Directions:

Add all ingredients into blender and blend until smooth. Makes one serving. **WL**

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1348 West St. (Exit 31 Off I-84)

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Popular playtime picks

Today's hottest games to entertain kids this summer

Compiled by Alison Jalbert

Zombie Run!

"The cards all have zombie kind of things on them. Zombies are popular and it's an easy-to-learn game. That's part of the draw; when people come in looking for games, as an adult, they want to have fun playing the game, too."

—Sara Scott, owner of The Perfect Toy in Avon



IQ Bit

"It's a one-player game with 120 different ways to play it. It starts out really easy, but with 120 different ways to play, it gets harder as you go on."

We have a demo of it up on the counter [and people] really get into it.

That's always an indication that it's a good game."

—Dave Ekwall, owner of The Wooden Toy in Wethersfield

Wet Head

"It's a new game – you wear a helmet filled with water and pull

out a stick with the possibility of getting the whole helmet of water [on you]."

—Kim Reed, owner of Pinwheels Toys & Games in Glastonbury

Spot It!

"The cards have a variety of pictures on them, with one matching picture on every card. You want to be the first one to spot the match. Younger



children do really well [with this game]. As an adult ...

we don't see it as quickly. It's challenging for adults – fun, but we don't tend to win."

—Deb Necker, owner of Necker's Toyland in Simsbury **WL**



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LIFE with kids

Help your child love *music* and *dance* Classes offer lifelong benefits

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

It may be fun to imagine your child as the next Joshua Bell or Misty Copeland when you sign up for music or dance lessons. Your child may have visions of being a star, basking in the spotlight surrounded by legions of adoring fans.

While many develop a lifelong love of music and dance, some children quickly

decide that the lessons aren't for them. What's a parent to do when a child starts saying "I don't want to go!" when it's time for the weekly lesson?

The first aspect to consider is whether your child is indeed old enough for the activity. Todd Zurman, owner of Vortex Guitar Studio in Wethersfield, said that's more of a factor

than many parents realize.

"I think in a perfect world after 8 [years of age] is a great time to start playing. Older students, they know what they want to play when they come in. They know their musical style," he said. "If they can't spell guitar, they probably shouldn't be taking it."

However, Zurman noted that it's not



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LIFE with kids

a hard and fast rule.

"I had one 5-year-old who liked listening to the Beatles, who liked listening to Led Zeppelin. He had great taste in music. That kid was a breeze to teach. I have 8-year-olds who don't listen to music; their parents don't like to listen to music," he said.

There's also a practical consideration with certain instruments, such as the guitar. And that's simply the size of the instrument may be too much for your child to handle.

"At 6 years old the smaller guitars can be harder to play," he said.

Other instruments might be more appropriate for younger students, such as piano.

"I think 5 seems to be the age that makes sense for starting off. I've had 4-year-olds and they can't sit still and they're not really ready," said Mike Montgomery of Newington Music, who teaches piano, drums, guitar and bass. "I have a lot of piano students. At that age it's a good instrument. There isn't a physical requirement on your fingers like guitar. Piano is great for 5-year-olds."

Don't worry that your child is

too old to start. Despite the influence of his guitar-playing father, Zurman didn't start to play until he was in seventh grade. Previously, he played drums.

He said to give the lessons time.

"Dance particularly taught me discipline and gave me a love and appreciation for the arts. ... Kids need an outlet, a place to let go and be themselves. It takes time to find that, and it forces them to work hard. But it's worth it, for them and the parents."

– Diana Evjen

"If they've been wanting to play and they come to the first lesson and think they don't like teacher, take a month of lessons. It takes time to get used to each other," he recommended.

If your child still isn't into it, it may just be that the child is not ready.

Or, perhaps the child wants to play something else.

"If they want to play drums, let them try being a drummer. If they want to play guitar, let them try being

a guitar player. They should have freedom of choice to try different things," he said.

Managing your child's expectations is also important.

Kids sometimes quit because "it's

harder than they thought," Zurman said. "Years ago when Guitar Hero came out, kids were taking guitar because of the game. Then they find out they can't just play like Jimi Hendrix. They didn't know they'd have to practice."

Gregory Colossale, founder of BackBeat City in Glastonbury, agreed.

"It appears recently that it's instant gratification that they receive from other means. That isn't some-

thing that comes quickly from piano. I find that a constant issue. [Students are] a little more impatient," said Colossale who teaches piano, voice, show choir and acting. "They're not understanding that it's the practicing, the time spent outside of the lesson, is when they get better. It's not in the 30 or 40 minutes we spend together once a week."

He suggested working practice into what a child already is doing.

"[A child] is probably watching an hour of television a day, and there's probably 22 minutes of commercials. If they practice during the commercials, that's a really smart way to practice. It's blended inside of their life. You play into their world and show them how the piano can fit in."

While technology can be a hindrance – Zurman doesn't even have a computer in his office – there are ways that it can be helpful.

Colossale said that students can record themselves playing.

"They're able to hear how simple they once sounded and how they grow," he said.

Colossale suggested that parents

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LIFE with kids

can help their child by making sure the piano is accessible, without books, plants or clutter blocking it.

"I think the best thing for a parent to do is encourage their young person to go up to the piano without prompting. Whether they improvise or make some noise or practice, encourage that and allow that to happen as much as possible," he said.

"Try not to complain about the noise," he added. "I was fortunate as a young person, I just banged on the piano and taught myself. Then it became an interest. I think it's about accessibility and your attitude toward it."

Gauging the love

While students are a little older when they begin music lessons, dance classes often start much earlier.

Shannon Barry, co-owner, Shamrock School of Irish Dance, which has satellite locations in West Hartford and Simsbury, started dancing when she was 4. She said that children have varied reasons for not wanting to come to lessons – and sometimes, it's a lot more basic than parents realize.

"Through the years I have found that the reason for young children between the ages of 4 and 7 would be that they simply don't want to leave the house. This might come as a surprise. However, when I have asked parents why, the answer is, 'When trying to leave the house to go to dance class, their child simply says I don't want to go.' I

then have said to the parent that their child is doing well in class, pays attention, and understands and follows directions and movements, and really seem to enjoy it while in class. Unfortunately, it seems, possibly, parents might be a bit too willing to say OK when the child doesn't want to go because, as parents, we are all so busy with work, housekeeping and other activities that it becomes easier for the parent to just say OK to their child and not go to class rather than telling their child, 'It is time for dance class and we need to keep the commitment we made and finish the year,'" said Barry, who is certified through An Coimisiun le Rinci Gaelacha.

She said it's important to communicate with the instructor when a young child doesn't want to go to class.

"Ask to speak to the teacher and see if they are participating in class. Also, if your dance school allows you to watch a class from time to time, you should be able to tell how your child is doing that way," she said. "You definitely will know if your child enjoys what they are doing if they are dancing around your house practicing [what] they are working on in dance class."

It's a different situation for kids in middle or high school.

"The main reason usually is they have joined an after-school sport or have a lot of homework," Barry said.

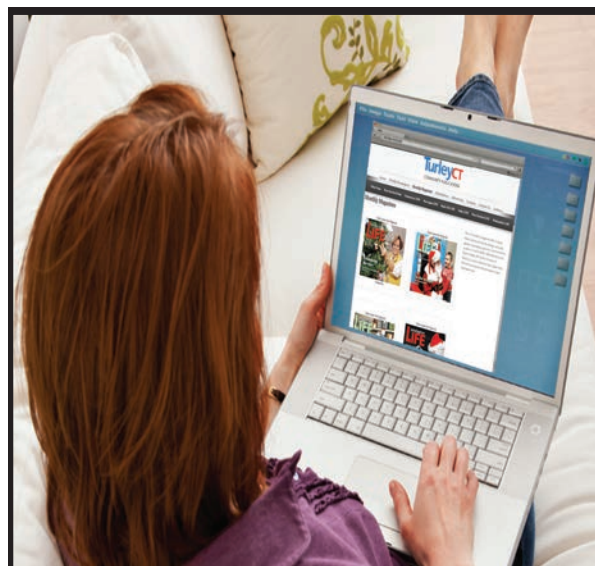
Diana Evjen of Evjen Academy of Performing Arts in

Farmington said that while scheduling is an issue, it can also help define where a child's interests are.

"The biggest reason for kids dropping their sports or extra-curricular activities is over-scheduling. And that isn't a bad thing. We have so many opportunities for children these days and they have the ability to find activities that suit them. We put them in dance and soccer and Girl Scouts or choir, and through the process of elimination, children are able to choose their best fit," Evjen said. "Parents should recognize that children are in the learning process, just the beginning, of their journey into finding their strong suits. With my own kids, I try to gauge their 'love' for the sport or activity."

She doesn't evaluate this by their willingness to practice, rather by their attitudes during and after the activity.

"As a mom in this generation, where a whole world is available for kids through iPads and cell phones and Xbox, etc., I feel like kids need to do something, anything, in a group or as part of a team, where they train [or] practice together and learn how to work as a team player," she said. "Dance particularly taught me discipline and gave me a love and appreciation for the arts. Everyone is different, but dance was and still is my outlet and I needed that when I was growing up. Kids need an outlet, a place to let go and be themselves. It takes time to find that, and it



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“If they want to play drums, let them try being a drummer. If they want to play guitar, let them try being a guitar player. They should have freedom of choice to try different things.”

– Mike Montgomery

forces them to work hard. But it's worth it, for them and the parents.”

Barry noted that the parents' attitude can make a difference.

“The parent's job is to give encouragement and to do the best they can. Make sure you are available to watch them practice when asked. Be excited for them if they have had a hard time with a new move or routine and now have mastered it,” she recommended.

Barry said there are numerous benefits to taking classes.

“Dance or music is a great outlet for children to relieve stress. It builds confidence, great self-esteem and dance, of course, helps with physical fitness,” she said, adding that dance and music can also help with math and public speaking.

Montgomery actually builds math into his lessons, such as talking about how many quarter notes fit in a measure. He also noted that music lessons can help children find their place in the world.

“It gives them something to be good at. It happened to me. I was good at music when I was younger; there were other kids like me in band. I remember really liking it and I was good at it, and I could fit in. I wasn't the sports kid. When I was in gym, I'm the last kid to get picked,” he remembered. “If a kid likes music, it's a good thing to try. You can really see them light up.” **WL**

Learn more at backbeatcity.com, evjenacademy.com, newingtonmusic.com, shamrockdance-studio.com and vortexguitarstudio.com.

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Safety first

Parents need to closely monitor children and modern technology

by Mark Jahne
LIFE Staff

The world of technology is rapidly changing, and those most adept at using it are often children and teenagers. But experts say young people tend not to understand the risks awaiting them in cyberspace or the need to use this technology wisely.

Cell phones, especially smart phones with Internet access, are in the hands of countless young people. They are the masters of text messaging, Facebook, Instagram and all the other forms of social media.

"The kids are the 'technados' and we adults are the immigrants. It is much more intuitive for our children," said Emily Daigle, director of special services for Wethersfield Public Schools.

Educators and law enforcement worry that the innocence of youth, when mixed with advanced technology, is a recipe for disaster. This is separate from the technology used in schools that, in some districts, can be taken home.

"Technology has moved faster than our ability to educate on the ethics and safe use of it. We see that not only with our kids, but with adults. Technology etiquette, I would call it," Daigle said.

"We're always trying to multi-task. It just never ends. I think we need boundaries. We need to respect face-to-face time," she added.

American society has become one of immediate gratification, she said, so

people are constantly checking their phones and texting, even while driving.

Daigle said few children, including the older ones, seem to understand that whatever they send into cyberspace is there forever and can come back to haunt them.

She emphasized that parents always need to know what their children are doing with the technology they are allowed to have and must stand up to complaints that this is something personal and private.

One idea she suggested is to place tracking devices on phones that will identify where a child is at all times. She firmly believes that cell phone and other technology use should not be allowed to proceed without strict monitoring until that son or daughter heads off to college.

"Parents need to understand that kids are vulnerable. They don't have the knowledge to make safe decisions," Daigle said. "Make the decision that is right for your house."

Parents especially need to be aware of how their children are using social media. Cyber bullying is a rapid-

ly growing problem.

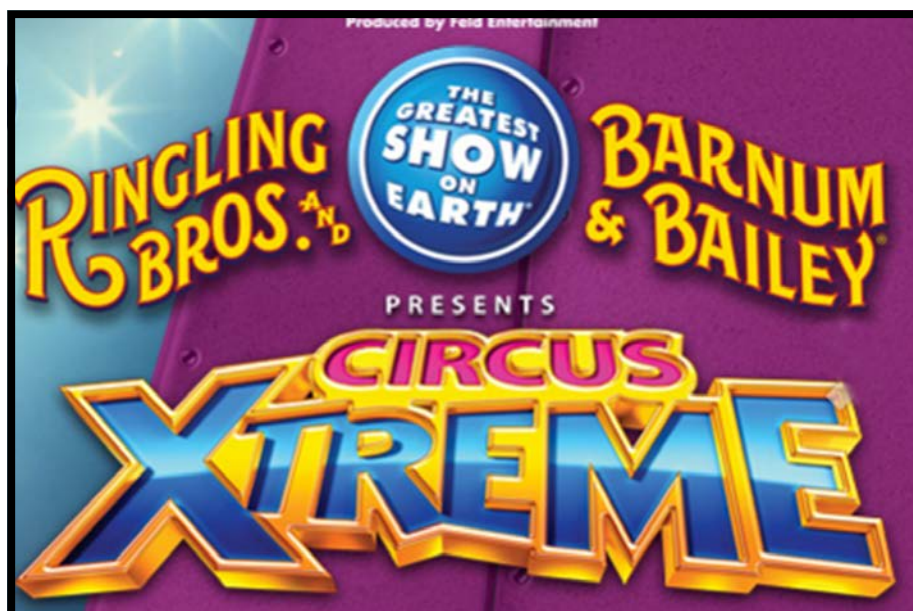
"That has changed so profoundly for these kids," she said.

In the old days, bullying was limited to the bully, the victim and perhaps a couple of other children who witnessed the cruel behavior in school or on the playground. The victim could get away from it by going home. Now, bullying and other harmful remarks are posted online where they can be seen by thousands and those comments never go away. Daigle called cyber bullying pervasive in school districts around the country.

She said the Wethersfield district works hard to educate students about this problem and how to respect and treat one another. Daigle urges parents in every town to work in partnership with the schools on these issues.

She warned parents that children will do their best to get around any blocks or boundaries placed on their use of technology and the Internet.

She compared granting a child free access to cyberspace to handing over the keys to the family car without first requiring some driving lessons. **WL**



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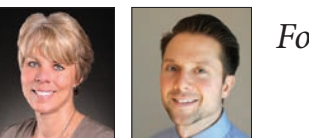
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Wethersfield \$318,000
62 Back Lane
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Wethersfield \$544,900
40 Bobwhite Hill
Exceptional Property! Elegant design Ranch features front columns, two story foyer, 9 foot ceilings, and Palladium windows.



Wethersfield \$339,900
58 Gooseberry Hill
Spacious 4 Bedroom Jefferson Split in desirable location. Open front porch, vinyl sided, CAIR and newer roof and windows.



Wethersfield \$279,900
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Jasper is a male domestic shorthair. He's 7 years old and friendly. He can handle other animals in his new home, but is shy with people at first.

Inquiries about adoption may be made at the Connecticut Humane Society, 701 Russell Road, Newington. Call 860-594-4500. More information, including videos, can be found online at cthumane.org. Click on "Adopt" and "Newington." The Connecticut Humane Society is a private organization and has no time limits for adoption.



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People notes

The following were named students of the trimester at Silas Deane Middle School.

Grade 7: **Kate Anzidei, Diana Cabrera, Alexandria D'Onofrio, Sarah Detrick, Charles "Connor" Gray, Meghan Gregorski, Declan Hallinan, John Lisella, Nathan Malicki, Lillian Peak, Lauren Peruta, Shelly Pettingill, Isabella Taverney, Lorien Touponse, Vasilios Tsipouras, Gabriella Villagra, Xavier White and Nazanin Zaer.**

Grade 8: **Alexis Almada, Alexander Buyak, Amanda Carmel, Joseph Coleman, Robert Cook, Gianna Cormier, Kelsey Crandall, Christopher Heavren, Andre Jorge, Kyleigh Joyce, Clarence Jubac, Genevieve Kirsche, Rei Koni, Katerina Pantaleo, Maria Pena, Kendra Rivera, Grace Weaver and Tyler Wolf.**

Madelyne Colon, Anne Fern, Karen Orefice, Lissette Rivera, Amber Sprague and Janet Tedone were named to the president's list at Goodwin College.

Kate Betts, Thomas Betts, Alessia Caruso, Amanda Civitello, Charlotte Cyr, Samantha DiBacco, Harim Hahn, Elizabeth Hammer, Max-William Kanz, David Marottolo, Matthew Marottolo, Luke Mills, Ambika Natarajan, Amrita Natarajan, Taline Norsigian, Joanna Williams and John Wolf were named to the first-semester honor roll at Kingswood Oxford School.

Amrita Natarajan, a student at Kingswood Oxford School, attended the school's 4th Annual Model U.N. for middle school pupils and was named outstanding delegate on the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Committee.



The annual Wethersfield High School Hockey Boosters Club Banquet was held March 30 and four graduating senior varsity hockey players were awarded college scholarships. They are David Edwards, James Garofalo, Ryan Kardas and Mitch Marena.

Freshman forward **Ryan Peterson** of the Pace University men's basketball team was selected to the 2015-16 Northeast-10 Conference All-Rookie Team.

Deniz Camli-Saunders and **Ryan Martinez** earned high honors for the third marking period from the University High School of Science and Engineering. **Helen Neti** and **Alenies Rodriguez** earned honors.

Katherine Brough, Molly Codeanne, Yining "Ivy" Liang, Grace Marino, Nicole Roode, Annmarie Rotatori, Gabriella St. Pierre and Mary Alistair Vidallon achieved high honors at Mercy High School. **Olivia Porriello, Maggie Silbo** and **Emily Tylki** earned first honors. **WL**

Thank you to the 5,300 volunteers who helped change lives for children and families in our community last year.



Clockwise from top left: Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA), 24th annual United Way Year of Caring, United Way Volunteer Budget Coaching, and, United Way Readers Program.

You gave your time. . . you gave a piece of yourself. Now, it's our turn to celebrate you! Thank you for opening up your heart. It's not every day that someone as caring as you comes along.

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Katie Langille of Wethersfield appeared on the TLC television program "Say Yes to the Dress." She did her wedding gown shopping at Kleinfeld's in New York City.



Wethersfield residents Thomas Betts, left, Amanda Civitello and Jack Wolf are members of the Kingswood Oxford School swimming and diving team. The boys' team won the New England title and the girls' team placed fifth.

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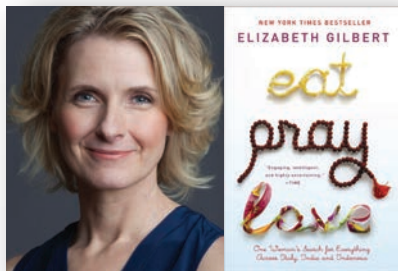
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Business notes

Eight members of Weichert, Realtors – The Zubretsky Group were honored by the national franchise for their performance. Paul Cranick was named to the Chairman's Club and John Oliveri

to the President's Club. Philip Ledwith and Thomas Walsh now belong to the Ambassador Club. Antonio Colasacco, Jodie Bechard, Jolanta Rojek and Thomas Pentalow were all honored for sales achievement. **WL**



D'Esopo Funeral Chapel received the Excellence in Customer Service Award from the Johnson Consulting Group of Scottsdale, Arizona. This award is determined by the overall performance scores of family satisfaction surveys distributed by JCG to funeral homes across the country. Shown with the award are Michael Klett, George D'Esopo and Janet D'Esopo Klett.



Hartford HealthCare at Home recently named Rita Grimes director of quality and education. Grimes, a senior level health care executive, is based in its Wethersfield office at 1290 Silas Deane Highway.

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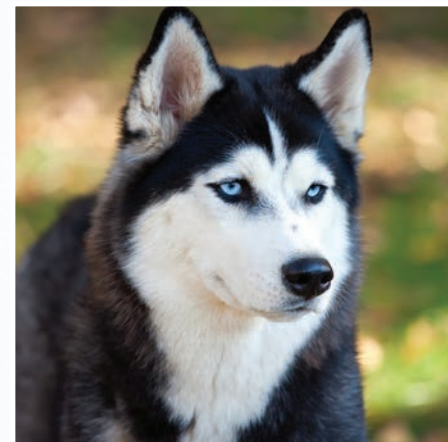
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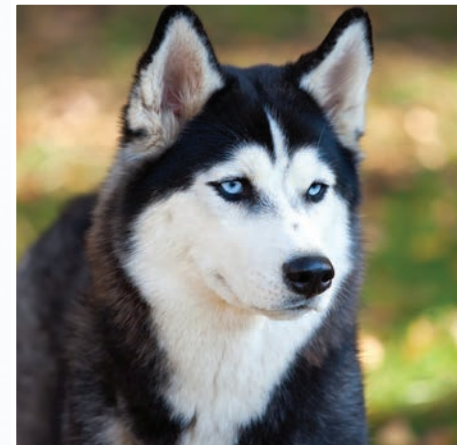
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Editorial

Enough with the texting while driving

It simply boggles the mind. Why do people think they can take their eyes off the road while operating a car or truck without dramatically increasing the risk that they could cause a crash?

Common sense would suggest that anyone over the age of 5 would know better than to do that. Yet drivers all over the country are crashing every day because they consider text messaging more important than operating their vehicles in a safe manner.

We live in a society that celebrates and often demands instant gratification and, for the first time in human history, we have technology that allows us to satisfy that craving.

We just can't wait to respond to that phone call or text message.

In recent weeks, there has been at least one fatal accident in Greater Hartford in which someone who was allegedly texting while driving struck and killed a pedestrian.

Another alleged text messenger struck and injured a police officer working on a roadside construction job.

We shouldn't need to create a multi-million dollar campaign to educate motorists about the dangers of distracted driving, especially texting. Studies have shown that looking away from the road for just a few seconds is the equivalent of driving the length of a football field at 55 miles per hour while blindfolded.

Nobody in their right mind would do that.

Texting is in some ways even more dangerous than drunken driving because the person manipulating the cell phone is looking at the phone, not the road. One can only imagine the level of threat created by someone who is texting and intoxicated.

"I only took my eyes off the road for a second," is the common plea to police.

There is no voice or text message that is so important that it cannot wait a few minutes. But if one thinks it is, then pull off the road for a moment to send a reply.

Police departments all over this area conduct occasional distracted driving enforcement patrols. Motorists drive right past uniformed cops with their phones in their hands and then act surprised when they are stopped.

The tickets are not cheap: \$150 for a first offense, \$300 for a second offense and \$500 for all additional offenses. But that's not making enough of a difference.

Maybe the legislature should pass a law allowing police to confiscate cell phones for 24 hours when they catch someone using them illegally while driving. Perhaps the inconvenience will prove a better deterrent than the fines.

It's time we all learned to resist the craving for instant gratification and refrain from text messaging while driving. It's too late to say "I'm sorry" after someone has been killed or maimed.

Letter

Thoughts on a long marriage

To the Editor:

I read with great interest your article in Wethersfield LIFE about tips for lifelong love. My dear wife Gene Pratt Lasher (deceased Dec. 29, 2014) and I were married for 72 years.

We were married in East Hartford Sept. 12, 1942 by Congregational Minister the Rev. Truman Woodward. We began living in south Wethersfield at 375 Middletown Ave. I was 4-F in the draft with high blood pressure.

Two months into married life, the draft called me up again and made me 1-A. My blood pressure went down.

I volunteered for the U.S. Coast Guard, stationed in New York City as a petty officer in intelligence. My wife found an

office job in Brooklyn. We obtained free theater tickets from the USO. We ate in great restaurants and saw all the great Broadway shows.

We were blessed with twin boys in 1944. I was discharged Oct. 12, 1944. We moved back to Wethersfield on Treat Road. Ten years later in October 1954 we moved to 100 Griswold Road in Griswoldville in a new house built by Bosworth.

We started out broke but sold my car for \$810 to pay for our honeymoon and an electric stove and electric refrigerator. We met at the Highland Dairy in West Hartford. She liked chocolate and I liked vanilla.

I liked her at our first meeting and fell in love with her in six months. We had two more

children, a boy and a girl. We both became active in First Church in Old Wethersfield.

We had mild disagreements but never went to bed still angry. A wonderful life. I miss her. — *Richard B. Lasher*

Editor's note: Lasher has long gone by the title of Honorary Mayor of Griswoldville. He is 96 years old.

Clarification

A story in the March issue about volunteer reader Martha Koehler listed the national website for the United Way. Anyone wishing to become a volunteer reader in the Hartford area, or who would like more information, is encouraged to visit the United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut website www.unitedwayinc.org.

wethersfield LIFE

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BY MARK DIXON
WFSB METEOROLOGIST [AMS]



Celebrate May...

The 5th month of the year is one featuring lots of events. Here's a look at historical weather related statistics for some of them.

Cinco de Mayo – average low: 45, high: 68; record low: 30 (2005), high: 93 (1949).

Mother's Day, the 8th this year – average low: 45, high: 69;

record low: 31 (1968), high: 92 (2000). Just a day later, the 9th, marks the latest recorded snow of 1.3" at Windsor Locks, where the official records are kept.

Memorial Day, falling on the 30th – average low: 52, high: 75; record low: 37 (1961), high: 93 (1987).

The hottest temperature recorded in this month was

99 degrees, that happened twice (on the 20th in 1996 and then again on the 26th in 2010).

Averages are calculated over a three-decade timespan, 1981-2010. Records have been kept for the Greater Hartford Area for over 110 years, dating back to 1905.

Some notable astronomical events happening this month:

On the 21st, the Full Flower

Moon – marking fertility with the warmer temperatures, named for the abundance of flowers coming into full bloom. Concerned about when to plant? The average last frost happens early in the month, so plan for around the 2nd week or later.

Then on the 23rd, Mars will be its brightest in over a decade. **NL**



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Living **spaces**



LIVING Spaces

Room to spare

Consider the possibilities if you have an extra room

by Sloan Brewster
LIFE Staff

Extra rooms in a home can be transformed into special spaces.

Thomas Mach, owner of In the House and Through the Garden in Simsbury, said he thought converting an empty bedroom into a craft room was a great idea.

"I know many people are doing that," he said.

A crafty space

Having done the same thing with a couple rooms in the store, Mach had some thoughts on how to perfect the space for its new use.

"Start with a paint job so it has a very different look," he said.

Big on environmental matters, Mach suggests going with an eco-friendly paint with a lot of pigment to add an exciting burst of color to the walls.

"Paints with a lot of pigment can give you depth of color," he said. "This is an opportunity to have fun in the room so you can have a splash of color."

Once the room has a fresh coat,

the next step is adding storage, because, Mach said, whatever the craft project is, there needs to be plenty of storage.

A common way to achieve that is by using lots of plastic containers, but Mach suggested a more attractive idea, noting it would also be cheaper than buying plastic crates; drop by a thrift store and pick up a vintage sideboard or hutch and upscale it with a bright splash of paint. Some of his customers have gone to the Habitat for Humanity ReStore in Bloomfield for such pieces.

"You could get an old piece of furniture and paint it and go a lot cheaper than bins," he said.

Making sure the room has quality lighting is the next important step in transforming the space, Mach said.

Then get a nice table to sit down and get to work.

"What's trendy? Old farm tables have become very popular," he said, adding that it's time for more paint. "So, again, you're repurposing."

Repurposing antiques is not only trendy, but easy, he said.

*What's
Your Plan?*



"Nothing harder than pick a color and paint, no sanding no prepping," Mach said. "You just pick a color and paint."

Finally, add a finishing touch to make sure the room breathes inspiration, Mach said. He suggests put-

ting up a bulletin board and affixing to it pictures or fabric swatches or whatever speaks to the crafts to be done in the room.

"Put stuff in that room that inspires you, to always give you ideas for other

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projects, almost like an idea board or an inspiration board.”

Don't forget the important apps. Mach pointed out that Pinterest, Houzz and Instagram were critical to getting going.

“That will always give you fresh ideas and inspiration, plus you can share all your crafts with other people,” he said.

With that, the room is ready for creating crafts.

“You've got lighting, you've got the inspiration, you've got the surface, storage,” Mach said. “And now you just need some free time to finish what you do.”

A fitness space

Since 1998, Frank Bentkowski, director of sales at Ultimate Fitness in Avon, has turned spare rooms into workout rooms.

“The first thing is to look at who in the household will be using the gym [and] what kinds of activities they enjoy doing,” he said.

An important step before bringing in equipment is installing the right kind of flooring for working out. Bentkowski recommends interlocking rubber tiles.

Then look at the logistics of the room and decide if you want a sound system, a television or both.

“You always want to look at cardio,” Bentkowski said of choosing equipment.

The cardio equipment is going to depend on a few different things. First, there's preference. Is the room for someone who likes to walk, bike, run or

who does all the above?

What is their skill set and do they need something that is easy on their ankles, or will help them with balance?

“You can have the exact replica of the experience in the gym,” but that equipment will be costly, Bentkowski said.

Once the desired elliptical, stationary bike or treadmill has been chosen, it's time to consider strengthening equipment.

“For strength, you have to look at how skilled the individual is,” he said.

There are different pieces of equipment from multi-stations that enable a person to work on every body part to more specialized units.

“To accompany that, I think it would be great to have a set of dumbbells,” Bentkowski said.

Set them on a four-foot rack and get an adjustable bench to use them. Some people like a pull-up station as well, but they're not for everybody.

Finally, there needs to be an area for doing core work with a tri-fold mat or a yoga mat, and possibly some kettle balls.

A fun place for escape

Linda Black of Linda P. Black Interiors in West Hartford thought the best use for a spare room would be an adult game room – “an oasis,” as she dubbed the room, a space to escape to at the end of a long day.

For resale purposes, Black said she felt it was



important not to change the room's structure or anchor anything to the walls.

The room should be painted in soothing colors and be a luxurious, plush spot in which to relax and “veg out,” Black said.

For her, there would be no phone in the room. While there may be a television, it would be

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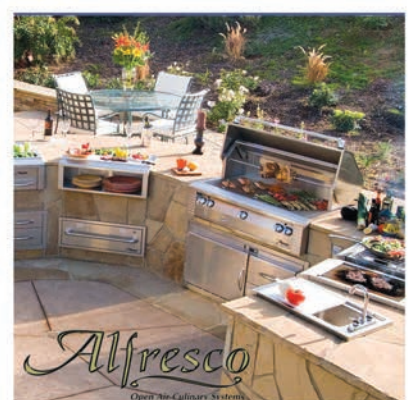
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hooked up to the laptop, so folks can get away from watching cable and watch shows online.

"Turn the phone off; just try to get to another space," she said. "Try to get away from the rest of the family, maybe try to get away from work."

She envisioned the space would be for a couple, like her own son and daughter-in-law, and would have two huge, oversized chairs.

"My son and his wife, they go home and play games," she said.

There would be a large chest between the chairs where the duo could each have a drink and where they would set their laptops. Both laptops would be connected to the TV so the couple could play games together.

While Black likes a contemporary look, she said she also likes a mix of styles and that the room can even be goofy.

It might also have magazines, newspapers and crossword puzzles on the chest or on the credenza where the television sits. There may also be books on shelves on either side of the credenza.

Stressing the importance of lighting, she said, "I like to have a multitude of different lighting in that room."

Ideas include recessed lighting and a lamp attached to the wall with a swing arm.

Hang an oversized picture of a beach or a favorite vacation spot, or someplace cheery or memorable, she said.

"It's nice to have, for instance, a little piece of where you've gone before," Black said. "Anything



that cheers, ... brings another frame of mind. ... Some people like maps on the wall to figure where you're going next."

Books in the room can include travel books, and there may be items for folks to enjoy hobbies while they watch television, such as yarn and nee-

dles for knitting.

"I'm just thinking about a room where people can think of things other than work," Black said "You're trying to grab snippets of time to be with your loved ones." **WL**



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Advice, thoughts and help for do-it-yourselfers

Businesses offer classes and blogs for great design at home

by **Alicia B. Smith**
Staff Writer

Local experts share their decorating know-how through blogs and hands-on workshops. Here is what a few had to say as to how they inspire those wanting to try their hand at decorating themselves.

Vivid Hue Home

Walking into Vivid Hue Home is like walking into a kaleidoscope of color, an abundance of decorative home goods in blues, pinks greens and yellows.

At one time there was no brick and mortar place to shop, or actual store to shop in, rather, owner Heather Grahling sat at her computer writing a blog about decorating trends.

"Over time, readers expressed interest in the projects I was doing in my own home, so many of my posts became more personal," Grahling said. "I love pushing the boundaries with colors and patterns, and I think that my followers love to see how far I will go."



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Some of those design ideas include wallpapering ceilings in her own home.

"I have always been passionate about decorating, and the blog was a terrific outlet in which to become a part of that world," Grahling said.

In 2015, Grahling opened her shop in Farmington, bringing her ideas and the trends she wrote about out of the blogosphere and into living rooms.

Grahling did not give up her blog, however, as it continues to be a part of her shop's website.

"With the brick and mortar shop now open, I often use the blog as a way to convey the fun items that we are currently carrying in the shop," she said, adding that she also continues to write about do-it-yourself projects, showcasing local artists and designers and anything else that she feels "will be interesting to my readers and customers."

Through her blog, Grahling recently shared a personal story about her daughter's health and about her trip to the New York Now 2016 show, a post that included plenty of photos.

It is not just her blog that interests about 15,000 would-be decorators, but she has 11,000 followers on Facebook and 5,500 on Instagram.

"I utilize all aspects of social media to reach my readers," she said. "For example, even though I don't have an ecommerce website, I post most of the products from my shop on Instagram and Facebook. It gives my followers an idea of what we currently have, and I have even started shipping to all over the U.S. just based upon what viewers want from my Instagram feed."

Additionally, readers of her blog have asked her questions, and she has come to realize how deep this interaction can be for her followers.

"The blog makes a personal connection with the followers," Grahling said.

Vivid Hue Home is located at 775 Farmington Ave., or find the shop and Grahling's blog at vividhuehome.com. Follow her on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest.

In The House & Through The Garden

There is no reason to feel intimidated when taking a class at Simsbury's In The House & Through The Garden. They offer several classes and will walk a hopeful do-it-yourselfer through each and every step.

Thomas Mach opened his shop in the summer of 2015, and, right away, customers were intrigued with the Annie Sloan chalk painted items he had for sale. So much so that he stocks this special project paint and offers classes weekly.

The most popular class is "Annie Sloan 101" in which Mach said, "You learn all of Annie's different painting techniques and how to do modern or the rusty, chippy looks, two-color distressing," he said. The class also allows participants to learn how to mix colors.

"It's really the fundamental class, it's really hands-on," Mach said.

Participants paint their own board in order to get a feel for the paint and the finish they like. There is also an assortment of beer, wine, coffee, tea and appetizers to enjoy.

For those who do not already know, Annie Sloan is a British artist who developed her own paint specifically for refinishing furniture. The

product is nontoxic, odorless and dries very quickly. The artist calls it chalk paint, even though there is no chalk in the product, but it does have a velvety finish. The paint is great for newbies because it does not require preparing a piece of furniture ahead of time and there is no priming or stripping necessary.

"It's not normal paint," Mach said. "It's not at all what you are used to using."

For those looking to move beyond the fundamentals, the shop's offerings continue with "I'm Having a Bad Chair Day," for those interested in painting fabric, which the Annie Sloan paint can also be used. There are also workshops for mirrors or picture frames for those who want to update something they already own.

Mach said, too, that he also does what he refers to as "Girls Night Out Evenings," in which a group of friends will come in to learn, sometimes for a bachelorette party or just to have fun with friends.

Other classes are for specific furniture refinishing projects, such as when participants bring in a coffee table or side table they own or found in a second hand shop and want to update.

"It's all about the workshops," Mach said.

The shop has 17 such events planned between April and June. Look for more information on its website www.inthehouseand-throughthegarden.com or visit it at 10 Jim Gallagher Way, Simsbury.

Cindarella's Attic

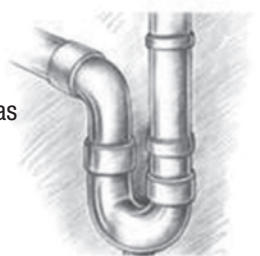
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furniture for more than 30 years. "I love it, it relaxes you so much," she said.

That might be easy for her to say since she has decades of experience, but Fiamma assures those who have never tried it that they can also find success.

She has been offering refinishing classes for three years at her shop at 59 Wells Road.

"When you leave my classes, you will know the four basic steps and a technique," she said.

The steps include cleaning the piece of furniture to be refinished, painting it with one or two coats with a chalk mineral-based paint, smoothing it down, and the final step, putting on a top-coat to seal it.

Her basic class starts off small. Fiamma gets kitchen cabinet doors from a company in Minnesota that typically have a small flaw in them so the company will not sell them. She uses the doors to teach her refinishing techniques, and participants

leave with a freshly painted tray that they did.

Her other classes are the kind in which participants bring in their own piece of furniture, a class she typically restricts to two people. This enables them to work on the piece, leave for lunch to give the paint time to cure, and come back to finish it later in the day.

"They just love it," Fiamma said, sharing the story about one customer who came in never having painted anything in her life, and she liked it so much she went home and refinished her entire bedroom set.

Fiamma said that for those who feel they might not have the artistic flair to try this, they, too, will like the finished piece. She will be there to walk them through each step.

For one thing, if it does not come out well, the American Paint Company paint she uses wipes off very easily.

"It's just a thing," she said.

"You can't make a mistake."

These days, more clients are preferring to finish their piece with a distressed look, although she can teach them how to make a piece look modern or rustic or any number of other styles.

She also offers the Chippy Class, a technique that when done allows you to see layers of paint.

"Whatever they want to know, I have so many tricks I can show people, Fiamma said.

Cindarella's Attic is located at 59 Wells Road, Wethersfield. For more information visit cinda-rellasattic.com or call 860-563-0351. **WL**

Correction

In the Living Spaces section that ran in the April issue, the story "Staging to stay" incorrectly identified renovation photos for a bathroom. The images were the work of Tamatha Wolfel of Infinite Home Design in Wethersfield. The paper regrets the error.



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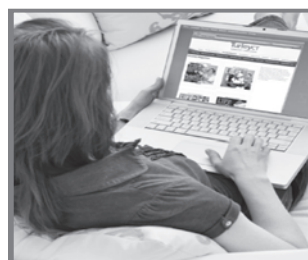
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Out of sight

How and where to get rid of what you no longer want or need

Once spring cleaning is done, there will be a collection of items that are no longer wanted. Three things can be done with them: toss, sell or donate.

Items that are broken, stained or worn out should be thrown away. Be sure to check which items can be recycled and which ones will need a

bulky waste pickup.

Some items will be good enough to sell.

Ralph Labozzo, appraiser and auctioneer at Golden Gavel, said the business services customers who want a few items appraised and those who want the entire contents of a house dealt with and the premises swept clean.

Right now, he said, vintage comic books from the late 1950s and early 1960s are hot sellers – those with a cover price of 10¢, 12¢ or 15¢. Super heroes from the Golden Age (think Superman) to the Silver Age (think Batman) are all in demand.

In addition to comic books, Labozzo said musical instruments are selling well (think guitars and

vintage saxophones). The same is true for Halloween and other holiday-themed ephemera from the early 1900s, and both vintage and contemporary game room items such as pinball and arcade games.

First edition leather bound limited edition books, especially if signed, along with coffee table books on the arts sell at auction.



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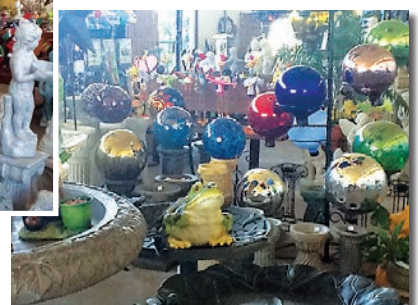
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There is no fee or obligation to have someone from the auction house come out and assess the items. Pick up would be scheduled for another time.

Items can also be sold online. Craigslist is especially good for large items that are difficult to pack and ship. It also saves you the service fee charged by eBay and Amazon.

Many clothing, accessories, jewelry and decorative items can be taken to a consignment shop provided they are in excellent condition. Items are priced with consideration given to condition, quality, brand, age, original purchase price, style and buyer demand. Consigners generally get between 40 percent and 55 percent of the sale price. A store's website will provide lists of items accepted – and those that are not – along with terms and conditions.

Some consignment shops deal specifically with furniture and other home accessories.

Sheri Jackson, longtime owner of Gillette Furniture Consignment in Wethersfield, said, "We love when people spring clean because we are often times the right fit for their lovely furniture and home décor."

Pub tables, sofas and desks are always in demand, along with console, coffee and end tables, and dining and bedroom sets, she said.

When working with large pieces of furniture, it's a common practice to begin with customers emailing photos of the items they would like

to consign.

"We want to see what it is," Jackson said.

Style, condition and quality are all taken into account.

"We like to find the next happy home for their piece," she said.

Holding a tag sale is another way to get rid of just about anything. Try recruiting others in the area to join you – neighborhood sales attract more shoppers.

Most items in good condition can be donated, and most donations will be tax deductible. In addition to well-known organizations such as Goodwill and Savers, here are some places you can bring items.



Electronics

Your town's transfer station

Every town is required to establish a convenient location for recycling residential electronics such as computers, printers and televisions. For specifics, contact your town.

Information is also listed on the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's website at ct.gov/deep.

Green Monster

260 Brook Street
West Hartford
860-897-1426
greenmonsterecycling.com

Just about anything with a cord or that operated on batteries can be brought to this recycling center for free. Hard drives are destroyed and nothing ends up in a landfill. The only items not accepted are washers, dryers, microwaves, vacuums, and appliances with refrigerant such as refrigerators, dehumidifiers, air conditioners and water coolers.



Furniture

A Hand Up Inc.

860-424-2980
ahandupinc.org

This organization based in West Hartford helps people transition from the streets into homes. Items must be new or gently used, modest-

ly sized, basic and practical. Its current wish list includes twin and full bed frames, small sofas and love seats, small armchairs and recliners, dressers, nightstands, bookcases, end and coffee tables, television stands, lamps, kitchen tables and chairs. Pickups can be scheduled. Arrangements must also be made for dropping items off at the warehouse on Talcott Road in West Hartford. For more details, see ahandupinc.org/wish-list/.

Habitat for Humanity ReStore

500 Cottage Grove Road
Bloomfield

860-519-0828
hartfordhabitat.org/restore

This home improvement and donation center sells new and gently used furniture, home accessories and appliances. Pickups can be arranged.

Building materials

The ReCONNstruction Center

731 New Britain Ave.

Newington
860-597-3390
reconstructioncenter.org

This charitable organization accepts good quality, new, pre-owned, antique, surplus and reusable building materials, lighting fixtures, appliances, kitchen cabinets, plumbing fixtures, doors, paint, wood stoves, commercial shelving, tools, architectural salvage, and replacement and original vinyl windows. Pickups can be arranged at no charge.



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Photo courtesy of The ReConstruction Center

Habitat for Humanity ReStore
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860-519-0828

hartfordhabitat.org/restore

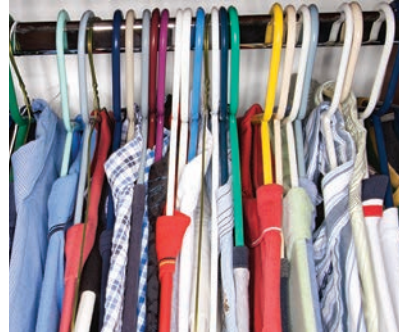
This center accepts building materials including cabinets, countertops, electrical hardware, roofing materials, paint, wallcovering, tile, floor coverings, doors, windows, plumbing materials, cinderblocks and bricks. For donation pickups, email photos of items to barbara@hartfordhabitat.org, along with your name, address and phone number.

Clothing

The Clothes Horse

175 Park Road
West Hartford
860-233-1411

This thrift shop operated by the Junior League of Hartford accepts current fashions and accessories for women, men and teens, including outerwear, tuxedos and gowns, and vintage clothing and accessories. Everything must be clean and free of rips, stains and fading.



University of Connecticut Health Center Auxiliary Thrift Shop

270 Park Road
West Hartford
860-586-8047

Run by volunteers, this shop accepts high-quality used clothing and shoes for men and women, jewelry and handbags. Unsold or unwanted clothing is donated to other organizations that assist those in need.

Market Square Thrift Shop

230 Market Square, Rear
Newington
860-667-7174

This shop, benefiting the Church of Christ Congregational, accepts men's, women's and children's clothing, jewelry and accessories.

Favarh Thrift Shop

250 Albany Turnpike
Canton
860-693-2899
favarh.org

The shop accepts men's and women's clothing, shoes and accessories. Donations can also be left at Favarh's main office at 225 Commerce Drive in Canton.

Second Chance Shop

730 Hebron Avenue
Glastonbury
860-633-5188

and
12 Station Street
Simsbury
860-658-7152

Items that can be donated include clothing for infants, children, men and women, along with accessories such as purses, hats, ties, scarves and jewelry. Run by auxiliary volunteers proceeds, from these shops benefit the programs and services of The Village for Families and Children.



Housewares

The gift shop at your local senior center

The swap shack at your town's transfer station

Favarh Thrift Shop
250 Albany Turnpike
Canton

860-693-2899
favarh.org
The shop accepts housewares and giftware. Donations may also be left at Favarh's main office at 225 Commerce Drive in Canton.

A Hand Up Inc.

860-424-2980
ahandupinc.org

Items being accepted are pots, pans, dishes, glassware, coffee makers, microwaves, silverware, bakeware, mixing bowls, storage canisters, cooking utensils and small appliances. No formal china, stemware or high-end appliances. Clean and gently used sheets, blankets, comforters, mattress covers, towels, pot holders, bath mats, shower curtains, and small rugs may also be donated. Pickups and dropoffs need to be scheduled.

Market Square

Thrift Shop
230 Market Square, Rear
Newington
860-667-7174

This thrift shop benefiting the Church of Christ Congregational, accepts small household appliances, dishes and glassware, home goods, gift items, toys and games.

The Clothes Horse

175 Park Road
West Hartford
860-233-1411

Among the items accepted are artwork, pottery, paintings, prints, housewares, books, decorations, unopened gifts and holiday items.

Second Chance Shop

730 Hebron Avenue
Glastonbury
860-633-5188

and
12 Station Street
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860-658-7152

The shops accept household items such as china, glasses, linens, antiques and collectibles. No furniture, beds, cribs, strollers, car seats, exercise equipment or appliances can be donated. Run by auxiliary

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volunteers, proceeds from these shops benefit the work of The Village for Families and Children.



Books

Your library's used book sale

On the Road Bookshop
163 Albany Turnpike
Canton

860-693-6029

ontheroadbookshop.com

This store buys books in most subject areas, including art, Eastern and Western philosophy, literature, scholarly books, very old books, leather sets and some recent textbooks. No romance novels, Reader's Digest books or book club editions are accepted. Book-related items such as bookends, bookstands,

prints and ephemera are also purchased. If you have too many to bring in, someone will come to you. The owner urges people to call before throwing out anything. Store credit is also offered.



Bicycles

Simsbury

Free Bike

828 Hopmeadow Street
Simsbury

860-841-2611
simsbury.bike

This free multi-town bike share program accepts bikes that are in good condition (no rust, no repairs needed). Bikes left at The Bicycle Cellar at 532 Hopmeadow Street will be brought to Simsbury Free Bike.

Household hazardous waste

Special collections are held for household hazardous waste that is generally defined as toxic, flammable, reactive or corrosive materials. These include oil-based paints, thinners, pool chemicals, pesticides, mercury fever thermometers and gasoline.

April 30, Farmington Farmington High School, 10 Monteith Drive, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. (Also serving Simsbury, Avon and Canton residents.)

May 7, Newington, Town Garage, 281 Milk Lane, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. (Also serving Rocky Hill, West Hartford and Wethersfield residents.)

June 12, West Hartford, Emanuel Synagogue, 160 Mohegan Drive, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. (Also serving Newington, Rocky Hill and Wethersfield residents.)

June 18, Simsbury, Public Works Facility, 66 Town Forest Road, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. (Also serving Farmington, Avon and Canton residents.)

June 25, Wethersfield, Webb

School, 51 Willow Street, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. (Also serving Newington, Rocky Hill and West Hartford residents.)

July 9, Rocky Hill, Stevens School, 322 Orchard Street, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. (Also serving Newington, West Hartford and Wethersfield residents.)

September 24, West Hartford, Public Works Garage, Oakwood Avenue, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. (Also serving Newington, Rocky Hill and Wethersfield residents.) **WL**



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Cooking up kitchen makeovers

See what you can do with \$500 and a weekend

by Lynn Woike
Staff Writer

Whether your home is large or small, the kitchen is bound to be the busiest room in the house and will generally show the signs of use more quickly.

We turned to Peter Lemos of DreamMaker Bath and Kitchen in Newington for some suggestions on how to spruce it up – all for less than \$500, a few basic skills and a weekend or less of your time.

“The trick is to take your time and avoid using creative shortcuts to finish quickly,” he said.

Cabinets typically take up the most space in a kitchen, and their finish becomes worn over time.

“A good paint job can add years of life to them,” Lemos said, adding, “Invest in good paint ... either oil-based or latex paint. Latex is easier to apply and clean up, but many argue that oil will give you a sturdier finish and is worth the extra effort. Choose an eggshell or semi-gloss finish. Flat

paint will look too dull and high gloss paint will emphasize any imperfections.

He recommends removing the doors and drawer fronts, cleaning all surfaces with a strong cleaner such as TSP, lightly sanding every surface to be painted and then using a tack cloth to remove any dust.

Whether you paint the cabinets or not, new pulls are a quick and inexpensive upgrade.

Knobs are easiest to replace since there is only one hole; replacing handles requires a bit more effort.

Noting that most kitchens are poorly lit, Lemos said, “You can add loads of style and function for very little investment with a few strategically placed lights to illuminate work areas or dining spaces or to just add to the general brightness of the kitchen. A new set of track lights, pendant lights or under cabinet lights can be a huge but simple addition to any kitchen.”



Choose fixtures that match your décor, he said, noting that an ornate traditional chandelier over a sleek, contemporary island will not look right. Pay special attention to high-use areas like countertops or islands; bright directed lighting in these locations can minimize accidents.

LED light bulbs use 95 percent less electricity than do incandescent bulbs. While they cost more upfront, they last longer and emit far less heat than other bulbs.

Another way to update the kitchen is to install a new tile backsplash.

“For a few dollars per square foot and an afternoon of work, you can turn that dull space between your counters and upper cabinets into a virtuoso display of artistry,” Lemos said.

“Gorgeous tiles in every color and texture imaginable are easily available and can be installed by most amateurs. You can find a good selection along with materials like adhesive and grout at your local home center. You will need to buy both field tiles and border tiles.”

Lemos advises ordering at least 20 percent more than the square footage being covered to allow for fitting and waste. For a professional look, rent a wet saw to cut the tiles.

If you invest in these projects, “the payoff in style, function and economy will be priceless,” Lemos said. **WL**

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